

A
D E F E N C E
O F T H E
P R O C E E D I N G S
O F T H E

Late ASSEMBLY at *Exon.*

B E I N G A
R E P L Y to Mr. *Peirce's* R E M A R K S
on those Proceedings.

To which are added,
Some Brief ANIMADVERSIONS on a Paper
subscribed by Mr. PEIRCE, &c. at the
Time of the Assembly, and now pub-
lish'd with his REMARKS,

A N D A L S O
A short POSTSCRIPT, containing some REMARKS
on a late Pamphlet of Mr. *George Jacomb's*.

By J O H N E N T T.

L O N D O N,
Printed for J O H N C L A R K, *at the Bible*
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DEFENCE

OF THE

ROYAL NAVY



AND THE

ARMY

THE

ROYAL AIR FORCE

AND

THE

ROYAL CANADIAN MOUNTED POLICE

AND

THE

ROYAL CANADIAN MOUNTED POLICE

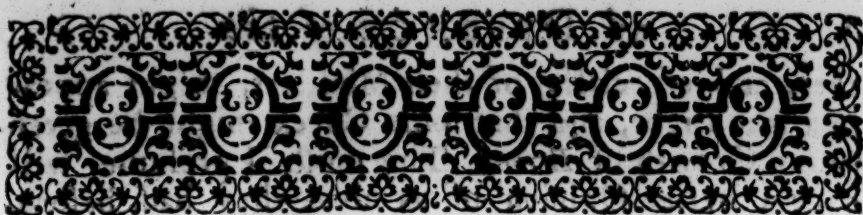
AND

THE

ROYAL CANADIAN MOUNTED POLICE

AND

THE



A
DEFENCE
OF THE
PROCEEDINGS
OF THE
Late Assembly at *Exon*, &c.



T hath been so much a *Fashion* with Mr. *Peirce* to censure the Conduct of other Persons, that I can't be at all surpriz'd at his *Remarks*; but should have wonder'd, if his known Temper would have suffer'd him to be silent, when he and the Assembly han't the Happiness of being of the same Sentiments. As the Case now stands, the World hath an undoubted Right to judge, whether what the Assembly have laid before it, is worthy to be communicated to it or no; if it be, the most won't, I believe, think the better of Mr. *P.* that he is pleas'd to banter its Publication, nor will this be thought by all any great *Beauty* of his Performance if it be not.

The great Expectation that was rais'd by three times five and forty Hands, hath, I hope, been answer'd with a proportionable Success. What the Assembly expected, I believe was, that the Reputation of Dis-

ters, and especially of their Ministers, might appear in a true Light, and that some Check might be given to the Growth of *Error*. The most, I presume, will have a better Opinion of us than they had before. Our Congregations will be satisfy'd, that we have not departed from the Ancient Faith; and the World must be convinc'd, that if *Error* should spread, it hath nothing like Countenance from us; and could we have had all our Brethren's Names to grace the Solemnity Mr. P. speaks of, 'twould have done much to heal the melancholy *Breaches* that have been amongst us: But Mr. P. 'tis likely, was willing, that some Notions should live and flourish, that others were as willing should be extinguished: But why should it give Offence, that we have publish'd three Lists of Names? Or why must it be owing to an Affectation of Pomp, or a Desire of spinning out the Account, that this is done? Might it not be as well to shew the Unanimity of those Ministers that were present? (which 'tis probable would otherwise be call'd in Question.) And might it not also be out of Regard to those that were absent, whose Consent in Faith we had no reason to doubt of, but yet might hesitate about the Expediency of our Letter and Resolution? And we are not asham'd to own, that some of our absent Brethren were willing to excuse themselves as to this, who notwithstanding are as zealous for the Doctrine of the Trinity, as any of the Subscribers can pretend to be. And besides, 'tis so mean a Pomp to have our Names printed three times over, that there is hardly any Thing doth afflict us so much, as that there should be Occasion to print them at all.

If any thing be publish'd by the Assembly, that can't be defended; 'twill, I am satisfied, be as readily retract-ed upon Conviction, as 'twas first publish'd. And had Mr. P. or any other, in order to such Conviction, considered with any Calmness what the Assembly have done, it would not, I am sure, have given the least Offence: But the World, I suppose, won't so easily excuse it; that Mr. P. should treat a *Body* of Men, and such a *Body* as our Assembly is known to be, with so much Severity and Contempt. And might not Mr. P. have publish'd his Thoughts, and yet observ'd the Rules of Kindness and common Decency? I shall beg
the

the Reader's leave to set before him in one entire View, some of the Usage we have had from his unfriendly Pen, and let the World judge, whether we have had the Treatment of *Men*, or *Christians*, of *Ministers*, and those that have adorn'd their Character as such.

“ And here to omit the many Charges of Infincerity that are brought against us throughout the whole
 “ Performance, we are represented as Persons of an imposing Spirit, and such as have a Design to ruin the
 “ smaller Number that differ from us. We are represented, as favouring a Popish Inquisition, and as
 “ those, that by our Principles have set it up, and as imitating that vile Office, and its dissembling Shams,
 “ by our artful Proceedings. That tho' we pretend to be the Successors of the old *Puritans*, we proceed by
 “ an Oath *ex Officio*, and have been guilty of that which is base, and tyrannical. That tho' we solemnly disclaim a Jurisdiction over other Mens Consciences,
 “ we dissemble herein. That the Design of all our Proceedings within Doors, is to fix an Odium upon
 “ all those, that won't tamely submit their Understandings to our prescrib'd Declarations; and that
 “ the Managers without Doors, have used all the Art they are Masters of, to blacken, and defame them.
 “ That when we could not oppress them, by the Assistance of the *Magistrate*, we have endeavour'd to do
 “ it by the Power of the *Mob*; and that we, who have thus procur'd them the Trial of *Cruel Mockings*, would
 “ not boggle much at getting them honour'd, with the Trial of *Scourgings*; Yea, moreover, of *Bonds*, and *Imprisonments*.
 “ That the Christian Methods we have heretofore taken for the Recovery of those that have been
 “ in Error, have been Reviling, Slandering, setting up an Inquisition, and all the Ways of Injustice, and
 “ Violence, that were in our Power. That we have impos'd upon the Credulity of People, palmed gross
 “ Falshoods upon the World, under the Attestation of five and forty Hands; and that from a Distrust of the
 “ Evidence we have for a *Pretended Truth*, we have quitted all Pretence to Argument, and betaken our selves
 “ to a childish Way of Haranguing. That we have countenanced a Use of the Scriptures, that serves to
 “ stir up Mens Passions, without working upon their
 “ Under-

“ Understandings. That the great Design of what we
 “ have done, was to prejudice People against their Per-
 “ sons; and that declining to hear what they had to
 “ say, we prudently consider’d, that the wisest Course
 “ was for Men to judge before they heard them, and
 “ knew what they say. That we worthily imitate the
 “ Popish Uncharitableness, as well as their Plea for
 “ an implicate Faith. That tho’ by sly Insinuations
 “ we endeavour to have it believ’d, that they are de-
 “ parted from the Unity of the Faith; we make new
 “ Articles of Faith our selves, and are Creed-makers,
 “ that supplant the Apostolical Doctrine. That by
 “ our Proceedings, we have so served the Cause of Po-
 “ pery, that our Performance merits a new Edition at
 “ Rome, rather than London. That we have recom-
 “ mended to the People an implicate Faith; that Ig-
 “ norance is with us the Mother of Devotion; and that
 “ we industriously imitate the laudable Example of the
 “ Romanists. That we have most gloriously patro-
 “ niz’d the Authority of the Inquisition, and that he
 “ can’t imagine, that any Thing farther is wanting to
 “ promote the Noble Cause of Persecution, than that
 “ the Parliament should intrust us with a secular Pow-
 “ er, and that the Non-subscribers are threatned with
 “ it.”

I might have mention’d more to the same Purpose,
 which Mr. P. perhaps, mayn’t think at all inconsistent
 with what he calls, Page 5th, his *Unfashionable Charity*:
 But to find such a Heap of Scandal, and all in the nar-
 row Compass of 33 Pages, does not seem so agree-
 able to Mr. P’s good Sense, or polite Education. I
 appeal to the World, whether the Assembly have done
 any Thing like this, to raise Mens Passions against
 Mr. P’s Person, or against his Brethren. I appeal to
 Mr. P’s Conscience, whether his Design in this black,
 and tragical Representation, was not to render the Sub-
 scribers odious, and useless; the very Thing that he
 complains of, in other Persons. I don’t wonder, that
 such Things are to be met with in the Celebrated Au-
 thor of *Foxes* and *Firebrands*, in the *Countermines*, and other
 such scandalous Performances. Nor should I wonder,
 if a Body of Ministers had been thus treated by a *Dur-*
fey, or *Dryden*; by a *Toland*, or *Tindal*, &c. ’Twould
 have

have been no Surprize at all, if such a Character of a Body of Ministers had occur'd in the Writings of some furious *Deist*, that was an Enemy to the Ministry, both Name and Thing : But that Mr. P. who can't be ignorant that we are Persons of tolerable Sense, and an unexceptionable Sobriety ; that we are not (to say the least) destitute of Ministerial Abilities, and that heretofore we have behav'd as Persons of unquestionable Integrity ; That Mr. P. I say, who is himself a Preacher of the Gospel of Peace, and very probably values himself upon being such : That he should paint us to the World, in such strong Colours of Infamy and Reproach, and that when he must have Reason to believe, that we acted according to our Consciences. This Conduct, I confess, to me is pretty unaccountable ; and seems to favour too much of that Spirit, that he so often condemns in other Persons.

I can't believe, that Mr. P. had any Design to serve the Cause of *Atheism*, and *Infidelity*, or those others that he knows to be our implacable Enemies, by representing us to the World, in such an offensive Dress ; Nay, I hope, he won't so easily be able to forgive himself for what he hath done in his cooler Thoughts. I shall be glad to find, that these Reproaches were the *Sallies* of a sudden Heat, and that he had no Intention to blast, and sink the Reputation of the forty five : But this, however, I believe, he must think, upon a serious Review, that the Enemies of Religion will triumph in the Treatment that he hath given us, and I can't but be grieved, that a Man of Mr. P's Character, hath given them a Handle, tho' never so undesignedly, so to do. But I am come more closely to consider why such a heavy Charge is exhibited against the Assembly.

And here, I observe, that Mr. P. is offended with the Title that we give our Declaration, he blames the Assembly, P. 4. that they call their Declaration a *Voluntary Declaration* : But why should any be displeas'd, that we call things by their Proper Names ? I am very sure, there was no Appearance of any Thing but *Harmony* and *Unanimity*, of *Zeal* and *Chearfulness*, in this Affair. I speak it with Pleasure, that there was no visible Symptom of such a Reluctancy as Mr. P. speaks of

of. What Discoveries any may have made to him of their secret Sentiments, I can't say; nor what the Conduct of any may have been at different Times, I don't understand; but my Charity, I confess, is so fashionable, that I must believe, they acted a sincere Part, and like honest Men, till I see the contrary better prov'd. I can't imagine, that any of the Subscribers thought that their Brethren were acted by a Spirit of Imposition; that any thought themselves compell'd to subscribe. And farther, I think they could cheerfully subscribe, without seeming to concur in any Design of Exposing their Brethren. I leave it with Mr. P. to examine, Whether his unfashionable Charity doth not differ too much from the Fashion of the Gospel, to charge the Assembly with Insincerity upon such Grounds as he doth?

Mr. P. supposeth, P. 4, 5. that because the Assembly have a considerable Influence, that some might be mov'd by worldly Hope and Fear, and not by any Conviction of the Reasonableness or Goodness of the Action it self; *i. e.* in other Words, He supposeth, that some are Persons of little or no Conscience, and for Bread can turn themselves into any *Shape*. On the contrary, I believe, that the Subscribers are Men of better Principles. That they were willing the World should know, how much they did abhor the *Arian Scheme*, and all those Notions, that detract from the Honour of our *Saviour* and *Sanctifier*. They were willing, as far as a Declaration would answer that End, to prevent the Growth of those Errors, that they thought to be dangerous; tho' Mr. P. doth not *. I can be sure for my self, that these were the Views that I went upon, and that without any Design to ruin any, that could not be satisfy'd to do as I did; and I see no Reason to suppose, but the Views of my Brethren were the same: 'Tis no Argument to the contrary, that the Assembly have a considerable Influence. I am willing to believe with Mr. P. that they have, and can't but take this Occasion to express my Satisfaction, that

* *Vid.* Mr. P's Animadversions on the Proceedings at *Salter's-Hall*. P. 21.

our People don't think so meanly, or hardly of us, as Mr. P. doth. If our People had found us in our particular Stations, as we are represented, they have too much Sense, and too great a Regard to Religion, to be so easy, and pleased under our Ministry, as (blessed be God) we find them to be. And then, I can't but think, that as an Assembly, we must have lost our Confidence with our People, if by a Conduct of so many Years, we had not discovered our selves to be Persons of *Integrity*, and such as have a just Regard to the Interest of Christianity.

I can't think so meanly of our People, as to imagine, that they pin their Faith upon our Sleeves : Nor can I suppose, that all the Influence our Assembly have, can recommend some Persons to our Congregations ; no not those that, perhaps, would think it a Disparagement if they should not be thought abundantly superior to the rest of their Brethren. And these just Antipathies to the New Scheme, Mr. P. knows they had taken up, before the Assembly interpos'd in that Affair. The Assembly saw no Reason to discourage, but rather to countenance these laudable Aversions, when they were so agreeable to their own Sentiments. And should the several Members be ask'd, Whether they were voluntary in what they did ? I dare say, they would unanimously abhor the Charge that is brought against them, and own that they acted most freely in what they did, both as to their Declaration, and Resolution : Nor do I know, that they have given the World any Occasion to suspect, that they are govern'd more by mercenary Views than other Men : Nor can I think, that any Thing that Mr. P. hath offer'd will bring any to imagine, that the Assembly have, in the least, deviated from the Sincerity of the Gospel.

The next Thing Mr. P. finds Fault with, P. 6. is, That we should not use the same Words in the Title of the Declaration, and the Declaration it self ; and is much offended, that we should with so much Assurance declare, That the Doctrine of the Trinity is reveal'd in Scripture, and yet not cite one Text for it. I would fain know, what Air of Assurance there is, in saying, That we believe the Doctrine of the *Ever Bless-*

sed Trinity, as express'd in the first Article of the Church of *England*, to be according to the Holy Scriptures ; could Mr. *P.* with all his *Modesty*, have express'd himself more inoffensively, and with less Assurance than the Assembly do ? Is there any Assurance in telling what I take to be the Sense of the Sacred Scriptures ? Does not Mr. *P.* do the same Thing himself, every *Lords-day* ? And wherein are the Assembly to be blam'd, that they don't enter into a laborious Proof of the Doctrine of the Trinity ? Had this been their Design, they could not have been at a Loss for Texts of Scripture, which all the *Art* and *Criticism* of Dr. *Clark*, Mr. *Whiston*, Mr. *Emlyn*, &c. have not been able to explain away. We are not convinc'd by any Thing these Gentlemen have said, or that Mr. *P.* hath thought fit to offer, but that the Scriptures are still on our Side. And, if we think so, I can't see why we mayn't tell the World, without Offence, what our Thoughts are. This shews that our Faith is such as we are not ashamed to own ; that we don't affect to be upon the Reserve ; and when the World knows what our Faith is, every one is at Liberty to disprove it, if he is able. That there is any Difference in the Title of our Declaration, and the Declaration it self, is not owing, I am satisfy'd, to what Mr. *P.* suggests. For we are all persuaded, I believe, that such Things are ascrib'd to our Blessed Saviour, and the Holy Ghost, as can't be ascribed to a *Name*, or *Quality* ; nor yet to any but the Supreme God : Nor should we have said, That we believe the Doctrine of the Trinity, as express'd in the first Article of the Church of *England*, to be according to the Scriptures, if we had not thought the Doctrine itself to be a Part of Scripture Revelation.

In the next Paragraphs, *P.* 7, 8, 9. where Mr. *P.* comes to consider the Declaration it self ; He speaks like one resolv'd to keep no farther Measures with the Assembly. As in other Parts of this warm Performance, we are represented as favouring a Popish Inquisition ; and as those that by our Principles have set it up : So here, we are represented, as " Those that imitate
" that vile Office, and its dissembling Shams, by our
" artful Proceedings ; that like Popish *Inquisitors*, we
" set up for proceeding by an Oath *ex Officio*, and
" that

“ that by our Resolution, which is subsequent to our
 “ Declaration, we have been guilty of that which is
 “ base and tyrannical.” Now, whether our Resolu-
 tion hath any Thing in it, that can with any Justice,
 or Modesty, be painted off in such *frightful Colours*, will
 shortly be consider’d in its proper Place : But as to
 the Charge of having set up a Popish Inquisition, &c.
 I would appeal from Mr. P. in a Passion, to Mr. P. in
 Temper, Whether he can believe in his Conscience,
 and cooler Thoughts, that our Proceedings have given
 any just Occasion for so black and odious a Charge.
 Mr. P. I am sure, is too well acquainted with Man-
 kind, and with the *Antipathies* that Dissenters have to
 Popery, not to know, that the Charge he brings
 against the Assembly is very popular. ’Twould ef-
 fectually put our Congregations out of Conceit with
 the Assembly, could they once be perswaded, we were
 about to introduce the Inquisition. There are many
 of the *Papists* themselves, that have such Abhorrence of
 this barbarous Office, that they won’t suffer it to have
 any footing among them : But can Mr. P. tell of any
 Popish Country, where the Inquisition is detested, in
 which so little will satisfy, as will satisfy those that he
 so heavily complains of ? If not, then, according to
 Mr. P. there must be an Inquisition in *France*, as well
 as in *Spain* and *Portugal*, *i. e.* There must be an Inqui-
 sition where there is none, as well as where there is.
 The *French* have an Inquisition, tho’ they don’t know
 it, and would never bear to have it establish’d among
 them. Nay, there is no Protestant Country, or, in-
 deed, any Part of *Christendom*, how much soever they
 may be for Toleration, where there is not a Popish In-
 quisition. There’s an Inquisition in *Amsterdam* (where
 Persons, if peaceable, may be of what Religion they
 think most agreeable to the Will of God) as well as
 at *Madrid*, and *Lisbon*, where they must be of the Ro-
 mish Religion, or none at all. And as for the *Tolera-
 tion* amongst our selves, for which we have, with so
 much Reason, been thankful to God and Men, for a
 great many Years ; it must, according to Mr. P. be
 establish’d upon the Foundation of a Popish Inquisi-
 tion, seeing we can’t be allow’d to have the Benefit of
 it, but upon our declar’d Assent to the Doctrine of the
 sacred Trinity.

I am surpriz'd, that a Man of Mr. P's Sense, should attempt to pass it upon the World, that we have set up a Popish Inquisition. Have we ever attempted to awe Men from reading the Scriptures, and examining into the Grounds of Religion ; which, Arch-Bishop Tillotson says *, is the grand Design of this Office ? Have we ever discover'd an Aversion to the Toleration of those that differ from us ? Have we ever manifested an Inclination, to fine, imprison, to burn, or banish, those that say, they can't be of the same Sentiments with our selves, if we had it in our Power ? Mr. P. can't be ignorant, one would think (however fond he may seem of his *Favourite Charge*) that we abhor all these Methods of Compulsion as much as himself, and that he can't be for a more extensive Toleration than we are. We should be glad, indeed, if the Ministers of Christ would be more free and open, in telling Persons what they take to be Truth and Error. We should be glad, if they would not so studiously conceal their Sentiments, under this loose and general Declaration, that they believe whatever the Scriptures say, concerning the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Mr. P. I am sure, can't but know, that there is no *Arian*, *Socinian*, *Macedonian*, or *Sabellian*, but will say the same ; and yet that 'tis impossible (if the Scriptures have one, and but one determinate Sense and Meaning) that all these should be in the right. So that if (as Mr. P. says) the grand Question in the present Case is, or ought to be, Whether Men receive the Doctrine reveal'd in the Scriptures ? How shall this grand Question be decided, if the World must not know how we understand the Mind of the Holy Ghost ? And how can this Thing be understood but by Words of our own, when his Words are used by all, but yet have such different, nay, contrary Senses put upon them ?

I am very sure, that the old *Puritans*, with whose Example we are upbraided, could not be greater Enemies to a Popish Inquisition, or its dissembling

* Vol. 13. Pag. 377.

Shams, than the Subscribers are. I am very sure also, that they were Persons that scorn'd to dissemble their Sentiments concerning the Trinity : That they thought this to be an Article of too great Importance, not to be open and explicate in declaring their Assent thereto. Whatever Objections they might have against subscribing other Articles that they thought were not supported by Scripture, they never look'd upon this Article to be of that Sort. Nor do I find, that any of them were ever suspected of favouring the *Arian Scheme* ; if they had, they were Persons of such great Integrity, that I can't question, but they would have purg'd themselves by Subscribing the Article as true ; or, if they had not thought so, they would honestly have told the World that it was false. They were Persons that fairly own'd their Principles without any *Equivocation*, and that tho' they were sure to suffer for it. Nor can I see any Reason to suppose, but that as there is a perfect Harmony between them and us, as to the Doctrine of the Trinity ; so they would have proceeded as the Assembly have done, if there had been Occasion ; and that without thinking themselves chargeable with setting up a Popish Inquisition, or proceeding by an Oath *ex Officio*. Mr. P. must know, that there is no such Way of Proceeding among us ; and, I hope, our Actions will ever convince him, and the rest of the World, that as we dislike Error, so we abhor Cruelty. We neither desire the Power that Popish Inquisitors have ; and Charity obligeth me to think of others, what I know of my self, that if we had such a Power thrown upon us, we should never use it, but declare against it. But after all, if Mr. P. will think otherwise, and go on to repeat his beloved Charge, in his future Pamphlets ; I hope, there are none that know us, that will believe the Imputation. And very sure I am, that none can, that will give themselves Time to read the Histories that are extant of the Popish Inquisition, and be pleased to compare them with our Proceedings. We thought our selves oblig'd to purge our selves of the Charge that was brought against us. And if ever any other Charges of so high a Nature should be laid against us, we shall have, I hope, such

such a constant Concern for the Honour of God and Religion, and our own Usefulness in the World ; as to take proper Methods, when assembled together, to purge our selves ; especially when we see it so necessary, as we thought it to be in our Circumstances.

As to the grand Absurdity that Mr. *P.* chargeth the Assembly with, *P.* 9. that his Motion to the Moderator should not be more regarded, 'twill be thought, I believe, by the impartial, an Absurdity of his own, if not worse, when it shall be considered, That we have declared, we shall be satisfy'd, if Persons can assent to the collective Sense of the Assembly, where the word *Person* is left out. Mr. *P.* takes Notice of this himself, *P.* 19. and therefore must know, That there was no Necessity of explaining the word *Person*. And it's best known to Mr. *P.* himself, whether the Motion he speaks of, was not made to obtain some Advantages against the Assembly, rather than for the Satisfaction of other Persons. Let this be as it will, seeing the Motion, as Mr. *P.* owns, was not made for his own Satisfaction ; 'twas very prudent, I think, in the Moderator, to decline an Answer, till some one should make the like Motion upon his own Account ; which, when a Person of very valuable Abilities did, without knowing any Thing of Mr. *P.*'s Motion, there was an Answer return'd, with which he was satisfy'd. Besides this Person, there were none, that I know of, that had an Inclination to subscribe, that made any Objection against the word *Person*. If they had, I believe what the Excellent Arch-Bishop Tillotson says*, would have been satisfactory to all. I shall take the Liberty to transcribe it, that I may at once effectually clear my Hands of this Objection ; which, I believe, is thought to be very formidable, because so often made. Says this great Man then ; " There are " *Three Differences in the Deity, which the Scripture* " speaks of by the Names of *Father, Son, and Holy*

* *Fol. P.* 547, 589.

“ Ghost ; and every where speaks of them as we use
 “ to do of *Three* distinct Persons ; so that, says he,
 “ tho’ neither the word *Trinity*, nor, perhaps, *Person*,
 “ in the Sense in which it is used by *Divines*, when
 “ they treat of this *Mystery*, be any where to be met
 “ with in *Scripture* ; yet it can’t be deny’d, but that
 “ *Three* are there spoken of, by the Names of, *Father*,
 “ *Son*, and *Holy Ghost*, in whose Name every *Christian* is
 “ baptiz’d ; and to each of whom the highest *Titles*
 “ and *Properties* of *God*, are in *Scripture* attributed : And
 “ these *Three* are spoken of with as much Distinction
 “ from one another as we use to speak of *Three* several
 “ Persons.

“ So that though the word *Trinity* be not found in
 “ *Scripture*, yet these *Three* are there expressly and fre-
 “ quently mention’d ; and a *Trinity* is nothing but *Three*
 “ of any Thing. And so likewise, tho’ the word *Per-*
 “ *son* be not expressly apply’d to *Father*, *Son*, and *Holy*
 “ *Ghost* ; yet it will be very hard to find a more con-
 “ venient Word, whereby to express the Distinction of
 “ these *Three*. For which Reason I could never yet
 “ see any just Cause to quarrel at this *Term*. For since
 “ the *Holy Spirit* of *God* in *Scripture*, hath thought fit
 “ in speaking of these *Three*, to distinguish them from
 “ one another, as we use in common Speech to distin-
 “ guish *Three* several *Persons* ; I cannot see any Reason
 “ why, in the Explication of this *Mystery*, which pure-
 “ ly depends upon *Divine Revelation*, we should not
 “ speak of it in the same Manner that the *Scripture* doth ;
 “ and though the word *Person* is now become a *Term*
 “ of *Art* ; I see no Cause why we should decline it,
 “ so long as we mean by it neither more nor less,
 “ than what the *Scripture* says in other Words.” What
 this admirable Person says, must satisfy Mr. P. that
 this *Term*, *Person*, is not so very exceptionable with all
 Men of Character, as ’tis with himself ; and till a more
 proper Word can be found out, I think we may, ve-
 ry innocently, content our selves with this.

The next thing Mr. P. animadvertes upon, P. 9, 10.
 is the Postscript relating to Mr. *Withers*, concerning
 which I can say, that there is not a word in it, but
 what Mr. *Withers* saw, and consented to, before it went
 to the Press ; and had he desir’d then, as he hath since,
 that

that it might have been printed in the Form in which it is in the *London* Edition, it would easily have been comply'd with. There are few, I believe, will think that there is any thing in this Postscript so odd, as 'tis, that Mr. P. should charge every thing with Art, or Equivocation, Tyranny, or Imposition, &c. that he doth not like. We have given the World no occasion to think, but that we abhor all Art that is not consistent with Honesty; and should rejoice if all would be so plain and open in confessing their Faith without any *Equivocation*, or *Mental Reservation*, as we have been. We can't but rejoice, that a Person, so truly valuable as Mr. *Withers*, doth concur with us in our Notions concerning the Trinity. Had he declar'd any thing publickly contrary to this, the World would know it. Had he declar'd any thing privately inconsistent with it, Mr. P. 'tis likely the better to grace his Cause would have made it publick. And if Mr. P. (when he says, that Mr. *Withers* abhors the Thoughts of imposing on others, and judging others) intends to insinuate, that Mr. *Withers* doth not judge others to be in the wrong that differ from him, 'tis an Injury to Mr. *Withers*, that all Mr. P's *Complaisance* to him can make but a poor Atonement for. I have reason to think, that Mr. *Withers* doth not take it kindly of him, that he should represent it as the Effect of much Importunity, that he hath consented to give the World the Information that he hath; Nor will the World, I believe, think the better of Mr. P. that he should give our Concern for the Preservation of the common Faith, no other than the mean and reproachful Title of a *Squabble*. Whatever the received Doctrine of the Trinity may be to him; 'tis a matter of the greatest Importance to us: Nor should we ever have made the Stand that we have, unless we thought so.

I have done with Mr. P's Remarks on our Declaration, and shall now consider those that he is pleased to make on our Resolution. And here, according to his usual Charity, he begins with a Charge of Insincerity and Dissimulation. He had told us, P. 8. where he speaks of this Resolution, that what we have done is base and tyrannical. And here, P. 11, 12.

“ That

“ That all the Design of our Proceedings within doors,
 “ is to fix an Odium upon those that won't submit
 “ their Understandings to our prescrib'd Declarations,
 “ and that the Managers without Doors, have used
 “ all the Art they are Masters of, to blacken and de-
 “ fame them. That we have not only given them
 “ the Name of *Arians*; but that, when we could not
 “ oppress them by the Assistance of the *Magistrate*,
 “ we have endeavour'd to do it by the Power
 “ of the *Mob*. Was the World to form an Idea of
 us by this Character, as it must be (one would think)
 Mr. P's Design it should, we must be lookt on as
 some of the most infamous Hypocrites, and Tyrants.
 As those that delight in nothing so much as Blood.
 As those that want nothing but Power to fine, impris-
 son, scourge, and hang Men. As so many *Nusances*
 to the Commonwealth, and such as deserve the Ab-
 horrence of God and Man.

'Tis a great Satisfaction to us under these Re-
 proaches, that till we manifested a just Concern
 for the Articles of our Faith, we were generally
 esteem'd as Persons of Temper, and those whose *Mo-
 deration was known to all Men*. And 'tis still a greater
 Satisfaction to us, that we are thus reviled, and per-
 secuted with bitter words; and have so much Evil said of
 us, I may say *falsely, for Christ's sake*. What Credit the
 World may give to such a Representation; and how
 very injurious it may be to our Character with those
 that don't know us, I can't say. With those that do,
 I hope 'twill do us no great Mischief; and others,
 I hope, will make favourable Allowances, as we our-
 selves do for Mr. P's Temper. If there were just
 Grounds for what he says, we ought to cover our Faces
 with Shame, and instantly to beg Pardon of God
 and the World: But we dare not repent of the Stand
 we have made against the grossest Errors; nor of the
 Methods we have taken to check their Growth, till
 we can be convinced that they are irregular. If we
 have assumed a Jurisdiction over other Mens Consci-
 ences, we don't know it: Nor can Mr. P. be certain
 that we do, unless he can pretend to know us better
 than we do our selves. And therefore, till we do
 know it, we must, I think, be clear of the Charge of
 C any

any *Hypocrisy*, or *Disimulation*. There may be several things, that may tempt us to question a Man's Sincerity : But to form a positive Charge of Hypocrisy against Persons, as Mr. P. doth, seems too much like an Incroachment on the *Divine Prerogative*, and too bold and assuming even for one of Mr. P's Penetration. And then as we don't know that we have assum'd an extravagant Power, so we are sure, that our Proceedings had other Designs than to fix an Odium upon our Brethren. They were design'd for the Honour of our God and Saviour. They were design'd for the Security of our holy Religion. They were design'd for the Benefit of the Church of Christ, and more especially for that of the People that are under our care. I wish Mr. P. may be able to satisfy his Conscience that he had the same Design in these *Masterly Strokes of Defamation*, that he hath thought fit to lay before the World. I should be very sorry, if any of the Subscribers should have done half so much to defame him and his Friends, as he hath to defame others.

As to any Attempts that have been made to oppress him, and his Brethren, by the Assistance of the Magistrate, or the Power of the Mob, I own myself to be a perfect Stranger, and take this Opportunity freely to declare, that I never thought, that these were proper Methods of Conviction. I abhor them as *Reproachful* to the Christian Religion. I ever have been, and ever shall be, an utter Enemy to all *Sanguinary Methods* for Conscience sake. If I am able to prevent the spreading of Error, by the Christian, and gentle Methods of Argument and Perswasion, of Advice and Counsel, and a Suspension of those Acts of my own, that must encourage it ; I am, I think, indispensably oblig'd to do it : But Mr. P. can't have a greater Aversion to all Confutations, by Magistracy and Mobs, than I have. And if it be true, what I have heard (and I can't doubt, but it is because of the Credibility of the Person from whom I had it) that Mr. P. himself hath lately own'd, that no Minister, or Dissenter of Worth had, he believ'd, any hand in raising the Mob : He should have spar'd that part of his Accusation : But 'twas very Popular to let it pass ;

pass ; and who can tell, but Mr. P. might have other Thoughts when this was writ, and be better inform'd afterwards ? However it be, Mr. P. I dare say, hath no need to be under Fear of Bonds, and Imprisonments. If he was the rankest *Arian*, or *Socinian* in the World, I would do all that's possible to discourage his Notions ; but nothing like Injury to his Person. This ought to be *Inviolable* on a Religious Account, where the Security of the State (as in the Case of Papists) is not concern'd. I can't at all doubt, but I have the free Concurrence of my Brethren, in what I have here said concerning my self. From the Knowledge that I have of them, I must believe, that they are all set against *Tyranny* : but let us hear what Mr. P. hath to offer to support his Charge, that we claim a Jurisdiction over other Mens Consciences.

To maintain this Charge then, he says, P. 13. " That
 " when we abuse a Power and Trust, lodg'd in us by
 " God, to enforce any thing upon Mens Consciences,
 " for which we have not a Divine Warrant ; we really
 " claim a Jurisdiction over other Mens Consciences.
 Now as this must refer to our Resolution ; so if it should be allow'd, that the Supposition is true ; yet, I don't see how it should in the least affect the Assembly : For whatever Latitude Mr. P. can use in the Exercise of that Power, that God hath vested him with ; we think that our Power is limited by the Word of God ; and that accordingly, as it would be sinful to reject some that offer themselves to the Ministry, and Ordination ; so it would be a most Notorious Prostitution of our Power, to receive all ; and especially such, as instead of promoting the great End of the Ministry (which is the Salvation of Sinners) would spread, and propagate such Doctrines, as in our Apprehensions are most injurious to the Souls of Men. We are to encourage none but *Faithful Men, and such as are able to teach others* *. How shall we know whether they have such an Ability or no ? or whether they are likely to prove faithful ; if we may not know what Notions they have,

* 2 Tim. 2. 2.

or what Doctrines they are likely to preach? If they won't satisfy us, how they understand the Scriptures, and those particularly in which are contain'd Doctrines of the greatest Consequence; must Ministers in this case act by an implicate Faith? must they take it for granted, that all are able, and will be faithful, that say they believe the Scriptures to be the Word of God? If this be allow'd, I must allow others to claim a Jurisdiction with a Witness over my Conscience. Yea, moreover, if this must be taken for full Satisfaction, if they declare, they are ready to subscribe the Bible, which seems to be the Principle Mr. P. goes upon, I don't see, how I can venture to reject them, if they are never so open and zealous in publishing what I apprehend to be the most abominable Errors. 'Tis but for them to say, If I charge them with Error, that they'll subscribe any words of Scripture, and I must presently receive them, tho' they tell me at the same time that they are *Papists*, or *Arians*, or *Socinians*, &c. I am to be no further Judge of my own Actions; I mayn't presume to suspend them, when I am told by any, that they are ready to subscribe the Bible, if they keep upon the *Reserve*: Nor may I dare to reject them, tho' I am perswaded in my Conscience at the same time, and from their own Mouths, by a Declaration of their Principles, that they renounce the Faith, that according to the best of my Judgment is contain'd in Scripture. Now if Mr. P. can satisfy himself thus, to have his Conscience at the *Command* of every Person, how unscriptural soever he may think his Principles to be, the Assembly can't give into the same Liberty; nor can they think it to be any thing like an Abuse of their Power, or a claiming a Jurisdiction over other Men's Consciences, that they can't.

But to satisfy the People of the Truth of what he says, he puts a Case, P. 13. wherein they are concern'd themselves, and then comes to consider the Case of Ministers as to *Ordination*. I must confess, I don't so well understand, unless it be to stir up a popular Odium, why the Case of the People should be consider'd, when the Assembly's Resolution only concerns Ministers: But Mr. P. perhaps, would think him-

himself neglected, if what he offers is not consider'd, and therefore I follow him in the Case propos'd. And here he supposeth, that Ministers "are entrusted "with the Care of the People, and the judging whom, "according to the Scriptures, they are to admit to "the Communion of the Church: And while they "require no more of the People, as terms of Com- "munion, than God does in the Scriptures, they really "claim no Jurisdiction over the Consciences of the "People; but if they stretch their Authority, in- "sisting on unscriptural Terms, and rejecting those "that won't submit to them; this is an actual claim- "ing a Jurisdiction over their Consciences. Now in the general; I readily agree with Mr. P. but can't see what it is to the Purpose, unless he thinks every thing unscriptural, that is not delivered in the very Words of Scripture. If Mr. P. thinks so, I can't but think that 'twill follow from hence, that all his own *Prayers* and *Sermons* are so, that are not deliver'd in Scripture Terms, and so the Argument would prove a great deal too much: But for my own part, I always thought, that nothing was *Unscriptural*, but what is not warranted by Scripture; and that by *Unscriptural Terms of Communion*, 'twas always understood, such Terms as have no sufficient Foundation in Scripture. When any such Terms as these are insisted on, Ministers stretch their Authority beyond what they ought, and have no right to claim the Submission of their People; but are answerable to God and their People too, for any spiritual *Penalties* that they shall inflict, by Virtue of a Power that God never gave. But then, if Mr. P. means thereby, that the Doctrine of the Trinity, as expressed in the Resolution, is such an unscriptural Term, as I suppose he must, herein I must crave leave to dissent from him. This Doctrine, we think, to be as much a Term of God's making as any thing in the Scriptures, and that Persons can neither believe or practise, as they ought, unless they receive this Doctrine. We apprehend, we expect nothing but what God expects, when we expect the Belief of the Sacred Trinity. And if the meaning of the Holy Ghost may be express'd in humane Words, as I believe Mr. P. can't deny, our Opinion is, that this is hap-

happily express'd in the Forms annex'to our Resolution. Mr. P. whatever his private Thoughts may be, won't own that he hath any other Exception against two of them, but the word *Person*; and in the last, this Exception being taken away, I don't see, but he and his Friends must be without Excuse; that they won't at such a time tell the World, that the Scripture Doctrine of the Trinity is here well express'd, if they believe in their Consciences that it is. And did they believe this as we do, and look upon this Article of Religion to be of that vast Importance that we take it to be, they could not act like honest Men, should they ordain, encourage or recommend those that would preach, and propagate contrary Notions. They must encourage those, that they believe would propagate Errors contrary to the whole Tenour of the Bible, very dishonourable to God, and of the worst Consequence to the Souls of Men. And tho' I take it, that the Cases of admitting to Communion, and Ordination, are not exactly parallel; yet in both a Man ought to have Satisfaction, that what he doth is regular, and will be accepted by God.

In admitting Persons to Communion, our Acts are not so much the Peoples Privileges, as that we mayn't suspend them in any case, if Persons live regularly, and profess to believe the Scriptures to be the Word of God: For what if I find them under this Profession, and notwithstanding this Sobriety, to be grossly and notoriously ignorant? What if they tell me, that tho' they believe the Scriptures, yet they believe, that Christ is no more than a *Mere Creature*? That he had no Existence before his Conception in the Womb of the Virging Mary: That as a Creature he ought not to be worship'd by any, nor made any proper Satisfaction for the Sins of the World. 'Tis known, that these are the Notions of some that profess to believe the Scriptures: And so of others it is the Notion, that the Holy Ghost is, as we observe in our Letter, a *Divine Person*, made under the Supreme God, by our Saviour; and of others, that he is only a *Name*, or *Quality*; by others that profess to believe the Scriptures 'tis declar'd, that in the Sacrament, we eat the very Flesh, and drink the very Blood

Blood of our Blessed Saviour : That when once the Bread and Wine, by the Priest's Benediction, are transubstantiated into the Body and Blood of Christ, we ought to pay them Adoration : And farther, That 'tis also our Duty to worship Saints and Angels. These are known by Mr. P. to be the Notions of some, and 'tis very possible, that all these, and a great many other abominable Notions, may be the Errors of one Man. And what if any Person tells me that these are his Notions, but yet, that he believes the Scriptures to be the Word of God ; and is ready to subscribe any Form that can be drawn up in Scripture Words ; must I immediately admit this Person to Communion ? I can't but think that Mr. P. himself would refuse such a one, and not suppose, that hereby he claim'd a Jurisdiction over other Men's Consciences. And however extensive our Saviour was willing the Communion of his People should be ; I must think, if the Case was my own, that I could not admit such a Person to Communion, without a most shameful betraying the Trust that Christ had reposed in me.

The Case I take to be much the same, with Respect to the Ordination of Ministers, which Mr. P. considers, P. 15. I readily allow with him, That it is the Will of God, that there should be Ministers in his Church, &c. and also, That we mayn't insist upon any Qualifications, that God hath never requir'd. I agree also with Mr. P. provided he will allow, that the Person to be ordain'd be duly furnished with ministerial Abilities, that he ought to be received, if he hold fast the *faithful Word*. But then, I would ask Mr. P. Whether it must be taken for granted, that every one doth this that is ready to subscribe the Bible ? What if he tells me plainly himself, or I have Reason to believe, that he holds the Errors mention'd in the last Paragraph ? And, What if he assures me withal, that he can't act like an honest Man, unless he preach, and publish these Things to the World ? And, What if I who am to be concern'd in his Ordination, do think, at the same Time, that such a Minister will do Ten thousand Times more Hurt than Good ? That his Notions are directly contrary to Scripture ; that they are subversive of Christianity, and extremely

by hurtful to the Souls of Men? Must I out-brave all these Convictions of my Conscience, and encourage the Ministry of one, that I think will defeat the great Ends of the Ministry? Whatever Mr. P's Conscience may allow him to do, I think, no one's Conscience should suffer him, thus to encourage the promoting of what he takes to be Error; and the Ruin of that which he thinks to be Truth. By me such Persons can be look'd upon as no other than *vain Talkers and Deceivers, teaching Things that they ought not*; those that are likely to *subvert* Persons by their unscriptural Doctrines, as those that don't hold the *faithful Word*. And as those, that out of Regard to Mens Souls, I ~~do~~ not ordain; though by the Suspension of this Act of mine their *Mouths were stopp'd*: Though such should subscribe the Bible a thousand Times over, as long as I can't but think, that they hold such dangerous Errors, I am forc'd to suppose, that they don't believe the Word of God, as they ought to believe it: Nor may I, under the Power of such Apprehensions, encourage their Preaching, lest I be found guilty of a Breach of Trust, that I can't answer to my great Lord, or my own Conscience. Nor may it be allow'd to make any Alteration with me, that, in the Consequence, it may bear hard upon some who have spent much Time to prepare themselves for the Ministry. I can't see that such have a better Title to preach the Gospel, than wicked Men have; whom neither Mr. P. I hope, nor any of his Brethren, would make any Scruple of rejecting from Ordination, however hard it might seem to be, that they should be under a Necessity of learning any Way of living, when they have spent the best of their Time in preparing for the Ministry.

It affects me but little, in this Case, that Mr. P. is pleas'd to say, P. 16. That this is agreeable to the Practice of the Papists, and their Way of defending themselves: For, on the contrary, I don't see how the Reformation can be justify'd, upon other Principles than those that the Assembly have gone upon. The Papists, though they don't ascribe such a Sufficiency to the Scriptures as we do, but in many Cases have Recourse to unwritten Traditions; yet if we

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consult the Writings of the great Defenders of Popery, we may observe, That they think that some of the grossest of their Errors, Transubstantiation for Instance, &c. may be defended from Scripture. If, therefore, at the Time of the Reformation, when 'twas expected that Persons should renounce the Errors of Popery, the Papists had thought of the Shift that some now have, and declar'd, That they could not think themselves oblig'd to renounce any of those Doctrines, except in the Words of Scripture; but that, however, as a Proof of the Soundness of their Faith, they were ready to subscribe any Scripture-Words relating to them: Must the Reformers have dropt their noble Design, and left those gross Corrupters of the Faith to go on in ruining the Souls of Men? If many of those that had the Power of Ordination, and were intrusted with the Care of the Reformation, were really of Opinion, as 'tis certain they were, That to encourage a Succession of such Ministers as were then in the Church, was, in Effect, to encourage the Subversion of the Christian Religion: Must they notwithstanding have gone on to encourage, and ordain, those that would not purge themselves from a Suspicion of Popery, any other Way than by subscribing the Bible? If they had done this, I don't see, how, in an ordinary Way, Things could have been brought to that happy Pass that we know they were. Nor do I find, that the first Reformers were heretofore blamed, that they insisted on a particular Renunciation of the Errors of Popery, in such Terms as no honest Man would subscribe to, if he still persisted in these Errors. I don't see but the Assembly, and the first Reformers, have acted upon the same Principles. And I can't but be sorry, that Mr. P. should so much as insinuate, that the Papists have as much Reason to insist on the Celibacy of their Priests, as the Assembly have to insist on the Doctrine of the Trinity. And it looks, I confess, not a little odd, that he should blame or banter any, as P. 17. for acting according to their Consciences. I wonder it should be reckon'd a Crime by any Protestant, that the Ministers of the Gospel should regard Conscience, or judge for themselves, who are proper Persons, as to Knowledge,

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Faith,

Faith, and Behaviour, to be ordain'd. If we may not be allow'd to judge for our selves, I think, we can give but a poor Account of our Conduct, to God or Men. The Assembly, I dare say, han't the worse Opinion of honest Mr. Fox, that he might have some Scruples about Subscriptions. Whatever they may think of some who refuse to subscribe any Thing but the Bible, they can't think of him that he was an Arch-Heretick, and hid some bad Opinion under that subtil Pretence. He was open in his Zeal for the Reformation, and, without any Subscription, had given abundant Proof of his Regard thereto. And, besides, it doth not appear but he could have subscrib'd the doctrinal Articles, if he might have been excus'd from subscribing the Canons, relating to the Liturgy, Ceremonies, and Discipline of the Church. These he always manifested a Dislike of, and therefore acted like himself, in refusing a Subscription : But he had put it out of all Suspicion, that he was an excellent Man, a hearty Protestant, and zealous for the Honour of Christ *.

If Mr. P. and his Brethren would give the Assembly the same Satisfaction, that they were as hearty Friends to the received Doctrine of the Trinity, which we take to be the Scripture Doctrine ; we are not, I believe, so eager for Subscriptions, but that we could readily encourage their Ministry without it ; though, at the same Time, we don't see the Reason, why Persons should refuse to subscribe what they believe to be true, or, at least, to declare that they believe it to be so, as several of the worthy Non-Subscribers at London have done. We han't so much as this Satisfaction from Mr. P. and most of those that join with him in subscribing a Paper of their own. And 'tis very questionable, as to far the greatest Part of them, whether we ever may.

We very readily allow, That if Mr. P. and his Brethren don't believe the Doctrine of the Blessed Trinity, as express'd in either of the Forms propos'd by the Assembly to be true, they ought, in Conscience, to refuse a Subscription. But then, we think

* Vid. Fuller's Church History, Book 9. P. 76.

they may not claim it as a Right to be ordain'd or recommended by those that do believe the Doctrine, and expect Satisfaction from those that they thus encourage, that they are also found in this Point of Faith. Without such Satisfaction, they think, that they can't faithfully discharge the Trust that Christ hath reposed in them. Without such Satisfaction, they think, they should open a wide Door for the grossest Errors to get into the Church. They are sure, from the contrary Interpretations that many put upon the Scriptures that relate to the Doctrine of the Trinity, that they can't have Satisfaction from a general Declaration that Men believe the Scriptures, whilst they refuse to tell in what Sense they understand them. So that if Mr. P. can satisfy himself to ordain *Arians, Socinians, Macedonians*, &c. who all pretend to believe the Scriptures: Or if he and his Friends can satisfy themselves, to ordain they know not whom, the Assembly can't excuse it to God, the World, or themselves, if they have not some farther Satisfaction. They think they have an undoubted Right to know what Doctrines such are likely to preach, whom they ordain and encourage. And if, according to the best Judgment they can make of Things, they han't the Faith that was at first delivered to the Saints, they are inexcusable if they encourage the Ministry of such. And farther, they think it to be a Case of too much Importance, to go upon an implicate Faith that they are in the Right, when they don't know but they are in the Wrong; and may many Times have too much Reason to suspect they are.

Mr. P. 'tis to be hop'd will the more easily excuse the Assembly, that they can't govern themselves by an implicate Faith, in this momentous Case, when, upon all Occasions, he declares himself an Enemy thereto. I leave it with him to consider how consistent he is with himself, when he exclaims so vehemently against such a Faith; and yet can't tell, whether the Person he ordains, be *Orthodox, Arian, or Socinian*, any farther than it can be gather'd from those Expressions of Scripture in which all agree, and which all claim as favouring their different Schemes. If Mr. P. in Order to his Satisfaction, insists upon any Interpretations of Scripture, he must quit those Principles of

Liberty that he speaks of, do the same Thing that the Assembly have, and be as much for what he calls Imposition and Persecution as they: But if nothing of this be insisted on, there can be no Satisfaction, but what springs from an implicate Faith; which, in Time, is likely to be of the most injurious Consequence to the Interest of Religion, and to fill the Church with the worst of Heresies. I can't see how this can be prevented, in an ordinary Way, upon Mr. P's Principles; or without taking such Steps as the Assembly have to secure Truth. And besides, What greater Imposition can there be, than that I should be oblig'd to ordain a Person, concerning whose Principles I can have no other Satisfaction that they are agreeable to Scripture, than that he tells me they are so? If Mr. P. can take this for Satisfaction, he must excuse the Assembly if they are not such Friends to an implicate Faith; and can't countenance an Imposition which would disable them from giving a reasonable Account of their Actions, in a Matter in which the Interest of Religion, and the Salvation of Sinners are so much concerned, as they are in the Admission of Persons to preach the Gospel. 'Tis suppos'd of such, that in the Course of their Ministry, they will declare their Faith in other than Scripture Words; and why they should refuse to do it to those that are to recommend them, I don't understand; unless they have a Faith that they are not willing the World should be acquainted with. Ministers were not thus upon the Reserve in the first Ages of the Church; but were wont, as Bishop Burnet says, to send about a Profession of their Faith to their neighbouring Ministers, or, as he calls them, Bishops, and by this Means maintain'd that happy Communion that was between them*.

The next Thing Mr. P. blames the Assembly for, P. 18. is, That they have not express'd their Resolution in such "good *English*" as he could subscribe, if he "had been never so much inclin'd to concur with them in it." 'T would, no doubt, have been a considerable Satisfaction to the Assembly, if they had had the Assistance of Mr. P's Abilities to render what they did more ac-

* *Introduction to his Exposition of the Articles, P. 2.*

ceptable to the World. But if every Thing be not so very smooth and easy as it might have been under his Direction; yet I don't see the Necessity that every Thing should be perfect in its Kind that is subscrib'd. 'Tis sufficient if it be tolerable, and may easily be understood; though it want some of the Beauties of exacter Performances, and han't the finishing Hand of a Master in Criticism. Of this Sort I take the Resolution of the Assembly to be; and that there is no such strange Obscurity in it, but that it may be understood by vulgar Capacities, and without any farther Explication. The Disjunctive, *Or*, leads us naturally to understand the Phrase thus: That as we can't in Conscience approve, that any should be ordained by us, or admitted to preach, that doth not believe the Doctrine of the Trinity; so neither can we, that any Candidate or ordained Minister should be recommended to a Congregation, that doth not believe this important Doctrine. Methinks the Turn of the Expression is not so very odd, as Mr. P. makes it. And really, I am not without Fear, that after all, 'tis not so much the Expression it self, as the Ground of the Resolution that hath occasion'd this Animadversion. The Subscribers must undoubtedly be oblig'd to Mr. P. that he should puzzle himself at all for their Sakes. However, they can't, I suppose, but think it strange, that he should declare so much, when his whole Performance, and this Paragraph it self is so plain a Declaration to the contrary. If Mr. P. be so much concerned for the Subscribers, he should, methinks, at least, forbear attempting to expose them, without Occasion; or upon so slight an Occasion as this, that all their Periods are not so smooth and easy as his own.

In the next Paragraph, P. 18, 19. Mr. P. says, "He can't subscribe the Article, or the Answers in the Catechism. (1.) Because of the Word, *Person*. (2.) Because since he understood his Christian Liberty, better than he did some Years ago, he is utterly against subscribing any Tests, that are not express'd in Scripture-Words, and that this latter Reason prevents his subscribing the collective Sense of the last September-Assembly." The first Objection I have sufficiently consider'd already. As to the second, it might

might have been of some Service, if Mr. P. had been pleased to tell us, how long he hath so well understood his Christian Liberty. I suppose, however, that it might be before the last *September-Assembly*, when most of the Ministers declared their Faith, as to the Doctrine of the Trinity, and Mr. P. among the rest, in other than Scripture-Words. Now, I can hardly think, that Mr. P. made a Declaration upon so solemn an Occasion, that he would refuse to subscribe. And, therefore, if the Assembly had acquiesced in his Form, 'twould have been a Test, as much as any Thing that is now offer'd, and, very probably, would not have been objected against. And, therefore, it looks, as if it was not every Sort of Test (as Mr. P. calls it) that he so much dislikes, but such as the Assembly have acquiesced in: But if Mr. P. would not subscribe his own Declaration, if generally agreed upon to be subscribed by others, which is hardly supposeable; yet I can hardly think, but he might have added a third Reason for not subscribing either of the Forms; and that is, That he did not think either of them to be true and agreeable to Scripture: And if it had been really so, and he had plainly and honestly told the World that it was so, it would not, I believe, have sunk him so much in the Opinion of many, as did his artful and obscure Declaration at the *September-Assembly*; and his keeping so much in the dark, and upon the Reserve since that Time, until he publish'd these Remarks.

As to the Alteration that Mr. P. speaks of, as made in the Vore of the Assembly, I believe it to be true, because he says it; but am not otherwise assur'd that it is so. However, I am pretty sure, 'twas not made by the Assembly to favour the particular Notions of any of the Subscribers: For should it be never so true, that 'tis the Opinion of some, that Christ is called the Son of God upon the Account of his Incarnation and Resurrection; yet I don't know that it is the Opinion of any, That he is call'd so only upon this Account: But if it was, I don't see that 'twill necessarily follow, That because Christ is call'd the Son, in the Baptismal Form, that therefore we must necessarily suppose Him as incarnate, and raised from the dead, when we say, that He and the Holy Ghost are one God with the Father; and that
because,

because, the same Person that is called the Son, in the Baptismal Form, is in another place called *Emmanuel* *. In another, *God over all, blessed for evermore* †. And in one and the same Verse, he who is stil'd the Son, is stil'd also, *Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace* ‡. And 'tis under this Notion of the Mighty God, and God over all, blessed for evermore, that we conceive of him, when we conceive of him as one God with the Father.

To the Resolution that I have been defending, there is an Addition made by way of Explication in the *London* Edition. This Mr. P. takes notice of, in a Postscript to a Letter to a Subscribing Minister, P. 57. and calls it a downright Falsification. What the Editor hath to say for himself in Answer to this Charge, is, that he had no hand in making this Addition. That which is said by those who were willing it should be made, is, that as they find it uncancell'd, and as a Thing agreed to in those Minutes of the Assembly, that were not Printed in the *Exeter* Edition; so they took it to be that which was universally allow'd of as the Sense of the Assembly, and that therefore it might very justly be added, as a Thing that was without Opposition consented to by those whose Names do follow this Addition. If this had not been their full Perswasion, this Clause might have been added, as that relating to Mr. *Jacomb* is, after the Subscribers Names, as the Sense of many that had Subscribed the Resolution: But they thought it to be the Sense of all, and therefore gave it the Place it hath; as a Thing as generally approv'd of, as the Resolution it self, of which it is not a part, but an Explication. And this must be thought sufficient to clear them from that hard Charge of Falsification, because they have delivered nothing, as true, but what they thought, and still do think, to be strictly so. What Mr. P. says in the same place, concerning humane Words, hath been already consider'd, and may, I hope, satisfy, that humane Words may very innocently be used for

* *Mat.* 1. 23. † *Rom.* 9. 5. ‡ *Isa.* 9. 6.

the better Security of Divine Truths. 'Tis the Bible that we build our Faith upon, and by Words of our own, do satisfy the World, and one another, how we understand it.

I come now to consider Mr. P's Remarks on the Assembly's Letter; and here he tells us, P. 19, 20. "He is sensible 'twould be written with much more Strength of Reason, and Fairness of Representation, if we had not been transported with an extraordinary Zeal. The Assembly, I am perswaded, are not ashamed to own, that they are Zealous for the Doctrine of the ever Blessed Trinity, and 'twould be an inexcusable Fault in them if they should not, when they believe it to be a Doctrine of such vast Importance; and such as ought to be received by all Christians, as a necessary Part of the Christian Faith: But Mr. P. I hope, can't say, that our Zeal hath transported us into any Indecencies of Language, nor is he able to bring the least Proof, that there is any Unfairness of Representation. We have said nothing of any Person, but what is strictly true; nor any Thing of any Books but what we believe to be so. We can't be convinc'd, but the Letter to the Dissenters, and Mr. *Whiston's* Books, and other Books that we might have mention'd, contain a great many dangerous Errors, and particularly, that these are such that we have taken Notice of. And if Mr. P. will undertake to prove that they are not, there are those amongst us, that will use the best Reason they have to maintain our Assertion. I can't but be glad, that he'll own, that there is any such thing to be found among us; and had he himself made us some of those favourable Allowances, that he hopes Persons of Candour will, 'twould have been no Disadvantage to his Performance: But I don't know but he may have an unfashionable Candour as well as Charity; and that Candour with him is to give no Quarter. If his Notion of this be the same with that of other Men, I have the like charitable Wish for him that he hath for the Assembly, that when he writes again, he may shew a candid and much better Temper.

The first thing that Mr. P. blames the Assembly for, P. 20, 21. is, that "they should send a Letter
" of

“ of Advice without the Reasons of that Advice ;
 “ that they should not alledge some positive Scrip-
 “ ture Assertions of their Doctrine, and of the neces-
 “ sity of believing it ; and insinuates as if the Reason
 “ why we have not done this, is because we don’t
 “ know where such Texts are to be found ; that the
 “ Baptismal Form can’t justly be reckon’d among
 “ these. He intimates, that we distrust the Evidence
 “ for this pretended Truth, because we have not
 “ made it clear by Argument ; but quitted all Pre-
 “ tence thereto, and betaken our selves to a Chil-
 “ dish way of Haranguing. He is sorry that Men of
 “ our Character should countenance such a Use of the
 “ Scriptures. That our Letter is of the same kind
 “ with those that the Papists were used to send at
 “ the time of the Reformation. That the Papists
 “ could take this Course with more Decency than we
 “ can, and that they and the Assembly evidently
 “ agree, that believing the Scripture is not suf-
 “ ficient, unless Men believe as the Church believes.

From this short Specimen ’tis evident, what great Al-
 lowances the Assembly are to expect from Mr. P’s Can-
 dour. I have a much greater Opinion of his Sense and
 Judgment ; and yet I can’t pay it such a blind Defe-
 rence, as to think that a Letter of Advice relating to the
 Trinity can’t be well written, unless the most substan-
 tial Proofs are inserted therein, that support the Belief
 of this Doctrine. Indeed had the Assembly’s Letter
 been directed to those that knew nothing of this Do-
 ctrine, ’twould have been very proper to have laid be-
 fore them the best Arguments for it : But our Letter
 was directed to those that had been brought up in the
 Belief of this Doctrine, that were not probably unac-
 quainted with the Arguments that are brought to confirm
 it. ’Twas directed to those, in whose Hands the Scrip-
 tures and other Helps are to establish them in that Be-
 lief : And therefore ’twas very proper and pertinent to
 advise them, to persist in the Belief of what they had re-
 ceived ; not so much because they had received it, as be-
 cause ’twas a Truth, not a pretended Truth, or a Truth
 of little Importance, as Mr. P. is pleased to intimate ;
 but a Truth of vast Moment, such as their Salvation
 was nearly concern’d in, and such as they had often
 heard, and seen proved from the Sacred Scriptures

by their own Ministers, and by others that have writ upon the Subject. And tho' Mr. P. doth so much dislike our way of writing Letters; yet if any will look into some of the Scriptural Epistles, and particularly into the second Epistle of St. *John* (with which however I don't pretend to compare ours) they'll perceive, that the Assembly have follow'd a good Example, a much better than that of the Papists, that we are upbraided with. This Parallel between the Subscribers and the Papists, I could not read without supposing, that Mr. P. might have in View a new Reformation of Religion, even that which he was so confident would take place in 1716. I won't be positive in asserting, that 'tis Mr. P's Opinion, that the receiv'd Doctrine of the Trinity is one of those things that need Reformation: But I confess, I am under a Temptation to think so, when I observe how he speaks upon all Occasions of this Doctrine throughout this Performance. When I observe, how some others speak that pretend to know his Mind: When I know, that before his Ejection, he forbid his Clerk to sing the usual Doxology: When he gave a Testimonial to one that profess'd himself to be an *Arian*; and says, that he can't give Glory to the Holy Ghost. Now if this be really his Opinion, and he'll undertake to prove, that the receiv'd Doctrine is not Scriptural; he'll find that the Assembly are so far from distrusting the Evidence that they have for this Truth, that they'll venture to lay it before the World, and try whose Doctrines are best supported by Scripture Evidence; and then, perhaps, it will appear, that the Words in the Baptismal Form have more Evidence in them for the Truth of this Doctrine, than Mr. P. will allow. I shall only offer here, what the great Bishop *Burnet* says upon these Words; to shew that the Assembly are not singular, or lay a greater stress upon this Argument, than one perhaps equal to Mr. P. doth. His Words upon this Scripture*, *Baptizing them in the Name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost*, are: "By Name is meant, either an Authority derived to them, in the Virtue of which all Nations were to be baptized: Or that the Per.

* *Mat.* 28. 19.

“ sons so baptized are Dedicated to the *Father, Son,*
 “ and *Holy Ghost*. Either of these Senses, as it proves
 “ them all to be *Persons*; so it sets them in an Equa-
 “ lity, in a Thing that can only belong to the
 “ *Divine Nature*. Baptism is the receiving Men
 “ from a State of Sin and Wrath, into a State of Favour,
 “ and into the Rights of the Sons of God, and the
 “ Hopes of Eternal Happiness, and a calling them
 “ by the Name of God. These are things that can
 “ only be offered and assured to Men, in the Name of
 “ the Great and Eternal God: And therefore, since
 “ without any Distinction or Note of Inequality, they
 “ are all Three set together as Persons in whose Name
 “ this is to be done, they must be all Three the True
 “ God; otherwise it looks like a just Prejudice
 “ against our Saviour, and his whole Gospel, that
 “ by his express Direction the first entrance to it,
 “ which gives the visible and federal Right to those
 “ great Blessings that are offered by it, or their Initia-
 “ tion into it, should be in the Name of Two Crea-
 “ ted Beings (if the one can be called properly so
 “ much as a Being, according to their Hypothesis)
 “ and that even in an Equality with the Supream and
 “ Incrated Being. The Plainness of this Charge, and
 “ the great Occasion upon which it was given, makes
 “ this an Argument of such Force, and Evidence,
 “ that it may justly determine the whole Matter †.

I am surpriz'd, that Mr. P. should say, that the Assembly and the Papists agree in this, that believing the Scripture is not sufficient, unless Men believe as the Church believes. I might challenge him to name the Person among the Subscribers, that doth not believe the Scripture to be a sufficient, yea, the only Rule of Faith and Manners. He can't, I believe, mention the Man among them, that is so much for an implicate Faith, as he and his Brethren. Let Mr. P. be as open in telling his Faith as the Assembly have been, and then 'twill be more certainly known than now it can be, unless to those that are his Confidants; though, indeed, he hath given pretty broad Intimations in this Performance. The greatest Evidence Mr. P. hath yet produc'd to prove that his Faith is sound, is just the

† *Expos. of the 39 Articles, P. 38.*

same that the greatest Hereticks, and those that do most notoriously wrest the Scriptures, do produce. Only, in this Respect, they are fairer than him, that they first tell us what their Notions are, and then attempt to prove them by Scripture ; whereas Mr. P. and his Friends only produce Scripture, and leave us to guess at their Notions. This seems to carry a Distrust in it, either that their Notions are not sound, or that they won't be acceptable. And 'tis remarkable, that this is a Method lately taken up, and therefore, very probably, to serve a Turn. Before Mr. *Whiston*, Dr. *Clark*, &c. reviv'd *Arianism*, they were wont to speak as others did ; and it can be remember'd of most of those of them that are ordain'd, that at their Ordination they made their Confessions of Faith in Words of their own, as 'tis desir'd they should now ; not out of any Disregard to the Words of the Holy Ghost (as upon all Occasions they popularly insinuate) but to satisfy the World, that they did not wrest the Scriptures, and put those unnatural Interpretations upon them that some did, and that they won't bear. I can't think but they had, at least, as great a Veneration for the Scriptures then, as they have now ; but, 'tis very likely, they put another Sense upon them than they did then. Whatever it be, Mr. P. and his Friends should be the last that speak against an implicate Faith.

In P. 22. he tells us, That the Design of this Letter is evidently to prejudice People against their Persons, Books and Doctrines. Now as to their Books and Doctrines, we own this is true, if of the same, or like Stamp with those we mention ; and the Reason is, Because we think them to be hurtful to the Souls of Men. But as to their Persons, we have no Prejudice against these, but should be glad if they had the same Reputation that formerly they had, and upon the same Reasons. However, though we have a just Value for Mr. P's Abilities, yet we can't look upon him to be so much an Oracle, as to regard every Thing as self-evident or infallible, that drops from him. Both Ministers and People are very desirous to hear what he says. And I assure him for my self, as, I believe, I may for others, that like the Noble *Bereans*, I'll carefully examine and compare it with Scripture, and be as open to Conviction as I see Reason. Mr. P. can't but know, that he might have
been

been heard before now if he had thought convenient ; and also, That the Press is open for his Opinions, as well as his Remarks. If he thinks himself to be in the right, as no doubt he doth, and believes that he is able by his superior Abilities, to bring over the World to his particular Sentiments, as he seems to intimate, 'twould be a great Charity to the mistaken Part of Mankind, to tell them how they are to understand those Scriptures that relate to this Doctrine, and not only to tell them, in the general, That they must believe the Scriptures. Mr. P. can't be ignorant, that Persons may profess to believe these, and yet be guilty of dangerous Errors, and give Occasion to others to complain of their Propagation and Increase. And why mayn't such a Complaint be made, without any Design to render him and his Brethren odious? If by holding any Errors that are subversive of Christianity, they render themselves disagreeable to their People, we can't help it. If they hold no such Errors, they know easily how to satisfy their People and the World ; and it looks strange if they won't, when yet they are able, when so very much Good might be done thereby.

I can't but be concern'd, that Mr. P. should say, with so much Assurance, " That not one of the Ministers " can be charg'd with delivering any one Error, and " that the utmost we have to say of him, the most obnoxious of all, is, That he hath declar'd for a Subordination of the Son to the Father." I believe, there are few of the Ministers that he pleads for, but have declared for a Subordination, as well as he. And I have Reason to think, That the Subordination that Mr. P. and they declare for, is a real and entire Subordination ; a Subordination as to Nature, and Essence, and all Perfections. Not such a Subordination as is pleaded for by many ancient and modern Divines ; and those particularly, that are mention'd in a late Performance of the Reverend Mr. Hallet's ; but a Subordination inconsistent with all Equality and Supremacy. Such a Subordination, I apprehend, and so do those Divines, bring down our Saviour to the Level of a Creature. And 'twould not be difficult, if there was Occasion, to name the Person that hath said he is no more. I could also tell Mr. P. of another that hath said, That our Blessed Saviour, and the Holy Ghost, are

are no other than the Wisdom and the Power of God. And Mr. P. must know, that he himself hath said, That he could not give Glory to the Holy Ghost. There are several other Things that I might have mention'd; but I can't be sure what is Error with Mr. P. and what Truth. However, with others, these are Errors of a dangerous Nature; and will, I don't doubt, be prov'd to be so, when Mr. P. or any of his Friends, shall undertake the Defence of them.

The next Thing the Assembly are blam'd for, P. 22, 23. is, " That instead of bringing a Charge against the Ministers, we cite two Treatises, which Mr. P. says, " if the Ministers don't happen to agree with, we have " made an Outcry against them for nothing at all." Had our Intention been to bring particular Charges against Mr. P. and some other Non-Subscribers, I can't suppose that we could have been at so great a Loss, as to all that with Mr. P. have subscribed another Paper. And from what Mr. P. says, it looks as if it would not have been very uncharitable to imagine, that the Notions we shew our Dislike of, were the Notions of some amongst ourselves. For tho' the Notions of the latter Author are not declared for; yet, 'tis observable, they are not declared against, when there was the fairest Opportunity to do it: Nor is there the least Dislike shewn of the Notions of the former; neither is there any Thing said, by which we might be induc'd to believe, that 'tis not the Opinion of the Ministers, that there are three Gods, one Supreme, and two subordinate. And 'tis a little unaccountable, if Mr. P. had not adopted these Notions, and made them his own, that he should not speak one Word against them. I remember Mr. P. himself, in his Answer to Mr. Jackman, complains of " his keeping so much in the dark, and not speaking " plainly; and tells him, That his artful Way to avoid " declaring himself upon such an Occasion, would, " with some People, strengthen the Suspicion of his " not being a Friend to the Government. If, says he, " he is a hearty Friend to King George, and an Enemy " to the Cause of the Pretender, he had a fair Opportunity enough of testifying it *." The same I say of Mr. P. If he was a hearty Friend to the received

* *Loyalty, &c. of High-Church and Dissenters compar'd.* p. 74. 75.
Doctrine

Doctrine of the Trinity, he had a fair Opportunity of declaring it; and his not doing it upon this Occasion, must strengthen the Suspicion of him with some Persons. I think he had never a properer Season to speak plainly. But instead of this, he only brings a Charge against the Assembly, for an imperfect Citation of the Letter to a Dissenter: But can Mr. P. say, that tho' there are not all the Words in the Page refer'd to, that there is the least Injury done to the Author of that Letter? Can any read his Book and not be satisfy'd, that the Thing that is cited is that which he attempts to prove in several Pages of it, and particularly in those cited in the *London* Edition? Does he not say, P. 25. "That he is not Equal or Co-ordinate with the Father; That he hath one to be a God unto him, and that therefore he can't be the Supreme God?" Doth he not say, P. 13. "That Wisdom and Holiness, which are Divine Perfections, are peculiarly the Father's, and more eminently in Him?" Does he not own, P. 14. "That the Word is inferior to the Father, and that therefore he can't be originally Equal to Him?" I leave it, therefore, with any one to judge, whether the Assembly have wrong'd the Author of the Letter to a Dissenter; and 'twas to satisfy the World that they have not, that more Pages are cited in the *London* Edition. This Mr. P. in a Postscript to one of his Pamphlets, is pleas'd to give the lost Name of a kind of Forgery: * But he that made this Addition might reasonably presume that his Brethren would not dislike it; and 'tis very hard that such a small Addition, or rather Correction, can't be made without so high a Charge; but 'tis well known that Mr. P. is us'd to speak in such a Dialect, and therefore the Charge fits more easy as coming from him, than it would if it came from another Man. I have said already what I thought sufficient of an Implicite Faith, and therefore take no further Notice of what is said about it, P. 23. only shall wish, that whilst Mr. P. speaks so often, and warmly against an Implicite Faith, he mayn't prove the great Patron and Encourager of it.

What is farther added in this 23d, and following Pages, relating to other Errors concerning the Trinity,

* *A Letter to a Subscribing Minister, &c. P. 59.*

I must think that they are not accounted Trifles by any of the Assembly, at least of the Subscribers. And I imagine, that if Mr. P. would give himself the Trouble to draw up a Letter to prevent their Growth, he would have the Concurrence of every Subscribing Minister. There's not the least Ground, I hope, to suppose, that those Errors, for which so little can be said, should spread in the World: But if they should, I don't doubt but the Assembly will appear as warmly and vigorously against them, as they have against those they have shewn their Dislike of. Those Errors that the Assembly appear'd against were then the spreading and prevailing Errors, and such as were most likely to spread, because of those that had espous'd them, whose very Names were sufficient to give Weight to their Notions, tho' never so odd, and tho' they had never so little to say for them. The Assembly were sensible how Things stood, and therefore began their Attack where there was the most Danger. And if Mr. P. and his Friends will come in to their Assistance, in assaulting those Errors that are yet remaining, they need not doubt but we'll join with them, tho' they did not think fit to join with us. We are very sorry that they should not; and must leave it with the World to judge why it should be so much resented by Mr. P. that we should attempt to suppress the Growth of *Arianism*.

That the Assembly have justly complain'd of subtle Equivocations, and sophistical Arguments, is not without Cause. The Books that they have quoted, and all, I think, that are writ upon the Argument, have a deep Tang of this Leaven. The Scriptures are so clear against their Notions, that Mr. *Whiston*, I believe, upon some such Account, hath thought fit to enlarge the Bible, and to make such Books a part of Canonical Scripture as are hardly writ with common Sense. And there are none that have read this Author, Dr. *Clark*, &c, but must see, that they want an *Index Expurgatorius* to throw other Texts out of the Bible as well as 1 *John* 5. 7. They give many of them a Turn so contrary to their plain and natural Meaning, and especially to that Text, *Rom.* 9. 5. that I very much wonder how their Learning, but especially how their Consciences, could ever allow them so to do.

I don't know that these of the opposite side have ever made such sorry Shifts to account for the Texts Mr. P. speaks of, or that there is the least Occasion for it. I wish he had singled out the Passages in the Assembly's Paper, where is any thing like what he complains of p. 24, that it might be defended or rejected: But, I confess, I can't so well reconcile it, that the Assembly should use those Arguments that are Sophistical; and yet, as Mr. P. says in another Place, p. 21, should quit all Pretence to Argument, and betake themselves to a childish Way of haranguing. Mr. P. may tell how to make these things hang together, but I can't.

When the Assembly declare, that they heartily pity, &c. Mr. P. says, p. 24, "That the Christian Methods, hitherto taken, have been reviling, slandering, setting up an Inquisition, and all the Ways of Violence and Injustice that were in our Power; and that the worst Rancour, &c. hath been uttered in our Prayers." I should be very sorry should there be any Ground for bringing such a heavy Charge against our Prayers. But seeing Mr. P. hath brought no Proof of what he says, I incline to think, that he is angry, that any should pray at all against the Growth of these great and dangerous Errors that have lately sprung up in the Church. But what, if after fervent Prayer, a thorough Examination, and an impartial Reading of the Scriptures, any Minister must conclude, that *Arianism*, *Socinianism*, &c. are subversive of Christianity, and most injurious to the Souls of Men, why mayn't they pray, that Truth may be secur'd, and these Errors suppress'd, as well as that the Idolatry and Superstition of the Church of Rome may be destroy'd; and that other things, that we think are not more contrary to Christianity than these Errors, may be extinguish'd? Mr. P. himself, I believe, would find no Fault with such Prayers; nay, I suppose, they are such as have often been us'd by him, and we think not upon better Evidence, that Popery, &c. are Errors, than that *Arianism*, &c. are. If therefore they are lawful in one Case, I can't see why they should not be so in another, where the Reasons are equal. Nay, if I think, and can't but think, that *Arianism* is a per-

icious Error, I don't see how I can excuse the Neglect, if I don't pray with Modesty and Humility that God would prevent its Propagation. I am astonish'd at what Mr. P. says in the same Paragraph, and that any one that calls himself a Christian and a Minister should give himself a Liberty to say such things as he doth without Ground. Can he name the Person that seems to be so violent and unjust, or that doth so much slander and revile as he himself doth in this Performance? Nay, can he say, of all the Subscribers put together, that they have said such severe Things of him and his Brethren, as he doth in this single Pamphlet? But with Mr. P. every one must be violent and unjust, a Slanderer and Reviler, that appears against the Errors of the present Times; and if so, the Assembly are satisfy'd to bear the Imputation.

If Mr. P. and his Brethren do hold no Opinions that touch the Vitals of Christianity, that make a Change in the Object of Worship, &c. as he says p. 25, 26. the Assembly have nothing to say against them in this Part of their Letter, and therefore are very unjustly charg'd with *palming gross Falshoods upon the World*. That which we apprehend doth touch the Vitals of Christianity, is the Denial of the true and proper Divinity of the Son of God and of the Holy Spirit, as one God with the Father. This is denied in the Books we caution Persons against, and therefore we had reason to speak as we do. Let Mr. P. make it clear for himself and Brethren, that they hold no such Doctrines: That tho' they refuse to subscribe any Forms of Words; yet they believe the Truth contain'd in these Forms, as most, I am told, of the London Nonsubscribers say they do; or let him put such an Interpretation upon the Words of Scripture subscrib'd by him and his Friends, as may give any tolerable Reason to believe his Opinion is, that our Saviour is God in the same high Sense that the Father is; and let him give any Reason to believe that he thinks the same of the Holy Ghost, and this will take away all Suspicion that he and his Friends hold none of these Doctrines that we shew our dislike of, as touching the Vitals of Christianity. But whether he thinks fit to give this Satisfaction or no, 'tis sufficient

cient to justify the Assembly, if the Opinions of the Authors we quote in our Letter (which were the things we were concern'd with) be Errors that touch the Vitals of Christianity. And han't we as much reason to say they are such, as Mr. P. hath to say, that *Socinianism* is so? for tho' *Arianism* upon some Accounts be more defensible than *Socinianism* is, yet in the main they both agree. They won't either of them allow, that Christ is Lord and God, except by the Appointment of the Father. They won't allow that he is necessarily existent, but say, that he owes his Being and all his Perfections to the mere Will and Power of the Father. They both speak of him as subordinate in every Respect unto the Father. And neither of them will allow, that any other Worship is due unto him besides an inferior Worship, such as might have been paid to the meanest of created Beings, if God had so appointed. There is a Harmony in other considerable Instances, and the greatest Difference seems to be about the Time of our Saviour's Existence. This Mr. P. I am sure can't be ignorant of; and therefore, unless he hath chang'd his Sentiments since he writ his *Latin Answer* to Dr. *Nichols*, he can't have reason to be so very angry as he seems, that we speak as we do of the Opinions that we condemn, for 'tis plain we have nothing to do with Persons. *Socinianism* Mr. P. himself calls *gravissimum Crimen*, a most heavy or dangerous Crime, p. 154. In the same Page, he says of their Opinions, that they are *nefanda Dogmata*, i. e. horrible, cursed Opinions, Opinions not fit to be spoken of. The Title that he gives it, p. 157, is *immanis Heresis*, i. e. an Heresy outrageous, loathsome, or exceeding great: And a few Lines after he calls it *Pestis*, by which I suppose nothing less can be meant, than that this is a Plague that is most fatal to the Souls of Men. These Characters, I think, are very just, but can never suit any Notions that don't touch the Vitals of Christianity. We think with Mr. P. in 1710, that what is said by him of *Socinianism*, is justly applicable thereto, and for much the same Reasons that 'tis applicable to *Arianism* too. They both strike at the Foundations of the Christian Religion. And if Mr. P. and his Brethren can make it never so clear that

this doth not concern them, which yet they have not thought fit to do, I don't see that the Assembly can be blam'd the more upon that Account, seeing 'twas not their Design to condemn Men, but to shew their Abhorrence of these Notions, which they thought were condemn'd by the sacred Scriptures. I hope it doth not argue a Neglect of Justice or Mercy that our pretended Orthodoxy, as Mr. P. calls it, hath led us to this; and I leave it with him to consider, whether it be either just or merciful to calumniate a Body of Men upon all Occasions with such Severity, and, for any thing that appears to the contrary, without Cause.

I can't see, notwithstanding any thing Mr. P. says, p. 25, 26. but that by the Notions we condemn, there is a Change made as to the Object of Worship. The great Object of Worship that I find propos'd to us in Scripture is the supreme God. The *Jews* are expressly requir'd, *Exodus* 34. 14. to worship no other God than the God of *Israel*, who was the living, and true, and supreme God; and this they were not to do, because he was a jealous God, and would not give his Glory to another. " 'Tis not said, says Bishop *Burnet*, " that they should not worship any as God, till they " had a Precept or Declaration for it; there is no Re- " serve for any such time, but they are plainly forbid " to worship any but the Great God, because he was " one and was jealous of his Glory*." And that the Christian Religion hath deliver'd nothing inconsistent with the Jewish in this Particular, is evident from that of our blessed Saviour, *Mat.* 4. 10. *Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.* Indeed, there no one besides the supreme God, that is fit to be the Object of our Adorations. 'Tis to him that we are indebted for our Beings and Preservation. 'Tis he alone is our God, and we are the People of his Pasture and the Sheep of his Hands. And for this reason should we worship, and fall down, and kneel before him, because he is our Maker, *Psal.* 95. 6. 7. Which Words, I observe, have a manifest Reference to that God whom the *Jews* tempted, which,

* *Expof. of the 39 Arti.* p. 47, 48.

which, according to the Apostle, 1 Cor. 10. 9. was our blessed Saviour. There is none, besides the supreme God that knows the Hearts or Wants of all Mankind, or can pretend to furnish them with suitable Supplies; and therefore as 'twould be Idolatry to worship an inferior Being, so also would it be foolish and most absurd. Accordingly, one great Design of Christianity is to take us from *Idols*, and engage us to *serve the living God*, Acts 17. 29. We are not to *worship and serve the Creature besides the Creator*, Rom. 1. 25. Nor to *do Service to them that by Nature are no Gods*, Gal. 4. 8. This was the Wickedness of the Heathens, and 'twas not only wicked because they did it without a Command; but because 'twas derogatory to the Honour of the true God, and could never therefore, as I apprehend, be commanded by him. To worship God, the supreme God, the God that creates, sustains, redeems, and sanctifies, and none besides, is the Language of the Old and New Testament; and therefore, to worship any other with religious Worship, is plainly to change the Object of Worship. 'Tis to set up an inferior, subordinate, dependent Being, instead of him who can only deserve our Worship, because God over all, blessed for evermore.

I take it for granted that 'twill be allow'd, that our Saviour is one whom we are to worship. *We are to call upon the Name of the Lord*, Rom. 10. 13. *And to worship him because he is our Lord*, Psalm 45. 11. We are to worship him as *Thomas* did after his *Resurrection*, John 20. 28. We are to worship him as the Disciples did at the time of his *Ascension*, Luke 24. 52. We are to worship him as the Apostles did when they were about to chuse a new Apostle, Acts 1. 24. 25. And as *St. Paul* did when he had a *Thorn in the Flesh*, &c. 2 Cor. 12. 8. There is a great deal besides this to put it out of all Controversy that our Saviour is to be worship'd; and this is what he hath a Right to, as one by whom we were made. As one by whom we were sustain'd. As one by whom we have been redeem'd. As one that *searcheth the Heart and Reins*, and will give to every one according to his Works. "Every Act of Worship, says Bishop Burnet, "external and internal, is directed to
"him

"him as its proper Object." The same might be prov'd concerning the H. Ghost. And therefore, if we worship these only as subordinate and inferior Beings, with a subordinate and inferior Worship, we worship them as the Heathens did their Idols, and the Object of Worship is chang'd. We allow notwithstanding that we are to direct our Worship to the Father, that we are to *bow our Knees to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ*, and through our only Mediator, *the Man Christ Jesus*, to have Access by one Spirit unto the Father, but not exclusively of the Son and H. Ghost. 'Tis not derogatory to our Saviour that we thus worship the Father, nor yet to the Father that *we honour the Son as we do him*. All the sacred Three are represented as having these glorious Perfections, and as having that near Relation to us, that challenge the best Homage that we are capable of paying. I have said the more upon this Head, to shew that it is not a mere Speculation that we differ about, but the Object of Worship, and because I think the Argument is decisive in this Controversy.

There is nothing I apprehend that Mr. P. offers, p. 26. to shew that the Nature of Christ's Satisfaction is not alter'd by the Notions that have been lately advanc'd. What his own Notion of Satisfaction is, he is not pleas'd to tell us, and perhaps there was this substantial Reason for it, that he foresaw it would not be pleasing to the World. Nor is he so kind to let us know what these Conceits of Men about the Satisfaction of Christ are, that have expos'd Christianity. He apprehended, perhaps, if he should be too open on this Head, he should expose himself. The common Notion of Satisfaction is, that our Saviour hath paid down such a valuable Price for the Redemption and Salvation of an Apostate World, as is equivalent to what the Sinner must otherwise have endur'd, so that *God may now be just, and yet the Justifier of such as believe*. From this we conclude, we think, with the strongest Evidence, the transcendant, infinite Dignity of our Blessed Saviour, because no one, we apprehend, besides a Person of such glorious Excellencies, could deliver us from the infinite Misery that was due to Sin.

Mr. P.

Mr. P. is pleas'd to ask, with a sort of Contempt, where the Scriptures do speak of Sin as deserving an infinite Misery. Perhaps I have more Reason to ask him where they don't speak of it under this Notion. Is not that Death that is the *Wages of Sin* a Misery of an endless and unalterable Nature? Are not the *Curse of the Law*, and the *Wrath to come*, from which Christ is said to deliver us, such Calamities as the Sinner must have endur'd for everlasting Ages without a Saviour? If these are the just Deserts of Sin, (and such they are, or else they would never have been threaten'd or inflicted by a righteous God) they are properly Miseries of an infinite Nature, because of a boundless Duration, and such, I believe, as Mr. P. can't so well tell how we might have been deliver'd from with the Security of the divine Honour and Government, unless he, who was in the *Form of God*, and thought it no Robbery to be equal with God, had taken upon him the *Form of a Servant*, made himself of no Reputation, been made in the *Likeness of Men*, been found in *Fashion of a Man*, had humbled himself, and became obedient unto Death, even the Death of the Cross. 'Tis very obvious that we may with the Honour and Safety of the Divine Government be forgiven and saved when such an ample Satisfaction is made: But that any inferior subordinate Being should satisfy, is what some have said, but not prov'd. And indeed the *Socinians*, who deny the true and proper Divinity of Christ, are so fair as to deny that there is any proper Satisfaction, as sensible, I suppose, that such a Satisfaction cannot be maintain'd upon other Principles. And how it can be maintain'd upon *Arian* Principles I should be glad to know.

I thought Mr. P. might have perceiv'd, without any considerable Difficulty, how the Notions lately advanc'd tend to shake People's Faith in the Holy Scriptures. This is not by urging them as the only Rule of their Faith, and to study them with the utmost Care, &c. No, in this we entirely agree with Mr. P. And besides, we should never have insisted upon Articles, Catechisms, and a collective Sense of the Assembly, if we had not observ'd how the Scriptures have lately been turn'd and wrested, because in their plain and most obvious Sense and Signification they could not be brought

brought to favour those Notions that were thought by some to be most rational, and agreeable to the Principles of natural Religion. We saw how notoriously the Words of Scripture were abus'd, and therefore, if possible, were willing to hold Persons to the Sense of Scripture in other Words; not out of any Dislike to the Words of the *H. Ghost*, he is our Witness, but from a Dislike of those Abuses that many had put upon the sacred Scriptures. And that the late *Unitarians*, as some of them affect to call themselves, have very much sunk the Honour of those sacred Writings, which are the *Test* and *Standard* of our Religion, is most plain. And this I take to be the great Reason why they are so much applauded and encourag'd by all the *Deists*. They imagine, I suppose, when they have thrown off this Part of Revelation, they'll throw off others in a little time, and so by degrees bring the Bible into as little Credit as the Doctrine of the Trinity. There is a mighty Harmony, 'tis plain, between *Deists* and *Unitarians*, and the latter have greatly strengthen'd the Hands of the former. And how can it be expected it should be otherwise, when they don't only question the Authority of particular Texts of Scripture, but raise Objections against entire Books, and add new Books of an unknown Original to the sacred Canon? Must it not lessen Mens Veneration for the sacred Scriptures, when they shall read of our Saviour in their Bibles, that he *is God over all, blessed for evermore*, and be told that this must be understood in a Sense that is applicable to an inferior subordinate Being? When they shall read that *all things were made by him and for him, and made by him as God*, and shall be told that nothing more can be imported hereby, than that they were made by him as God's Instrument? And further, Men won't easily think that these Writings are divinely inspir'd, if it be true what the Writers upon this Controversy say, that those Passages in the Old Testament concerning the great Self-existent *Jehovah*, which are apply'd by the Apostles to our Saviour in the New, are only apply'd by way of Allusion and Accommodation, and not as Proofs of what the Apostles say of him. And further, If Persons will receive nothing but what they are able to comprehend,

as many of our *Unitarians* will not; 'tis easy to foretel what must become of some Parts of Revelation, yea of all Religion in a little time. I can't help thinking, that the Cause of *Deism* and *Infidelity* is much promoted by the late Writers against the Trinity. The *Deists* plainly see that they are, and will I fear have too large a Harvest of Profelytes from amongst them in a little time, when they have already receiv'd some First Fruits.

I so far agree with what Mr. P. says in the next Paragraph, p. 27. that we should not only *mark those that cause Divisions and Offences, contrary to the Doctrines they have learned, but consider from whom they learned them*; and that they ought carefully to examine the sacred Scriptures, to see whether they can find the Doctrines they embrac'd contain'd in them. We are so far from looking upon this as dangerous, that we wish our People would read the Scriptures more; and if they have any Notions that are not scriptural, that they would give them up. For whatever may be popularly and artfully insinuated to the contrary, the Scripture is what we glory in, and admire God for. We own no other Rule, We know no other. And nothing is there that doth afflict us more, than to observe how grossly the Scriptures are perverted to support and countenance the worst of Errors. We shall have no Controversy with Mr. P. or Brethren, if they don't hold Notions that are contrary to Scripture; but can't, however, so readily believe that they have done nothing to cause Divisions and Offences. 'Tis known to every Body, that there was formerly a most desirable Harmony among us, and that this is broken by the Opposition made by some, not by us, to the Doctrine of the Trinity. Let Persons but once return to their old Faith, and we shall soon return to our old Harmony, and there is no one can do more, or I believe so much as Mr. P. can to make Peace among us. If his Notions be the same as formerly they were, why will he not promote the Peace of the Church, by declaring so much? But if they be not, as both his Friends and Enemies believe they are not, I think, considering his Weight and vast Authority with several of his Brethren, he can't be so easily excus'd from having no

hand in the Breaches that are amongst us. 'Twas in his Power to have prevented them, in a great Measure, and so it is to heal them again.

What we mean by the Form of sound Words, Mr. P. must see by the Scripture we refer to in our Account, viz. 2 Tim. 1. 13. and therefore, I don't so well understand, how he could suppose, as p. 27. "That we mean the Articles of the Church of *England*, or the Assembly's Catechism; and 'tis very strange he should not suppose the contrary." We believe, indeed, the first Article of the Church of *England*, and think the better of the Church for it's Soundness in the Faith. We believe also the Answers in the Assembly's Catechism, and look upon both to be sound Summaries of Faith: But we therefore look upon them as such, because agreeable to Scripture, with which we have carefully compar'd them. Let Mr. P. prove that they are not, and we are ready to give them up. But whilst we look upon them as true, and containing the Mind of the Holy Ghost, we shall think ourselves oblig'd to hold them fast. And I must beg leave to put Mr. P. in Mind, that it won't follow from his being ready to subscribe the Words of Scripture, that he holds the Scriptures as fast as his Brethren do. There are none that do this, but such as hold the *Truth as it is in Jesus*. And Mr. P. must know, that many of those can never do this, that own the Words of Scripture, unless all the contrary Doctrines can be true, that are pretended to be built on these Words.

'Tis, I think, very uncharitable in Mr. P. to suppose, as p. 27, 28. that when we advise Christians to contend earnestly (but soberly and christianly) for the Faith as it was once deliver'd to the Saints, "That giving him and his Brethren Names of Reproach is one of the Christian Ways of contending that we would recommend." And I would willingly know, in what Instances it is, that we so eagerly practise this Way ourselves. There is no one but must observe what Terms of Reproach he gives the Assembly; but what reproachful thing have we said of him, or any of his Brethren? Had we said of him, or any of his Brethren, that they believe the Son and the Holy

Holy Ghost to be one God with the Father, they would, 'tis probable, have look'd upon this as a Reproach to their Understandings : But as we have not said this, so neither have we said the contrary ; and I heartily wish, for the sake of Christianity, and the Peace of the Church, that they would for ever put it out of our Power to say or suppose it. We contend for no other Faith ourselves ; nor would we have others to contend for any, but what is deliver'd in the Scriptures. If we manifest a Concern for the Article of the Church, or the Answers of the Catechism, 'tis because they give us, we apprehend, the true Sense of Scripture. And as long as we think so, 'twould be something worse than an amazing Absurdity if we should not contend for them : But I think the Absurdity, if any, now lies somewhere on the other side, that they so violently run down *Creeeds* and *Catechisms* without Cause, and contend for something, which tho' Mr. P. may know what it is, yet some others, I am satisfy'd, hardly do 'till he shall tell them. And whether he will fully publish his Opinions or no, that they, or the World, may be the wiser for the Discovery, I can't say. 'Tis known that Mr. P. wants no Ability to speak plainly. And some, I suppose, would be glad to know his Notions, to contend for them, and form their own.

I can't but wonder, that Mr. P. should charge us with an implicate Faith in the same Paragraph, where (according to his complaisant Way of Writing) we have so nobly told what the good Foundation is, upon which the Hopes of Christians, according to our Apprehensions, can be establish'd, p. 28. I thought, to declare our Apprehensions of the Sense of Scripture, and the Importance of our Notions, was sufficiently explicite. And if it be not, why is Mr. P. so very angry ? And why doth he charge us with such gross Uncharitableness for telling our Mind ? I think the Assembly have been frank and open as Christians, and especially Ministers should be, in declaring what they take to be the Counsel of God. If we are mistaken in declaring what we apprehend to be the Scripture-Foundation of a Christian's Hope, we shall be ready, no doubt, to retract it upon Conviction : But how can

it be uncharitable to tell the World what we take to be the Mind and Will of God, and to be settled by himself as a Term of Salvation? Mr. P. I don't doubt, will easily allow, that some Things are necessary to be believ'd, and others to be done, in order to Salvation: Nor can I suppose, but that he sometimes tells his People what these great and necessary Things are, and that in other than the Words of the Holy Ghost. When therefore we are expressly told by our Saviour himself, *John 8. 24. That if we believe not that he is he, we shall die in our Sins*: What if by considering what is said of our Saviour in that Chapter, and by comparing the Old and New Testament together, we should take it to be the true and proper Import of these Words, that if we believe not that Christ is the true Messiah, and consequently according to the general Tenour of Scripture, perfect God and perfect Man, we render ourselves obnoxious to Death? What if we thought, that agreeably to Scripture the Words could not be justly taken in another Sense? And so again, when the Apostle tells us, *2 Pet. 2. 1. That if we deny the Lord that bought us, we are guilty of a damnable Heresy, and shall bring upon ourselves a swift Destruction*: What if we should take the true Meaning to be, that those are guilty of this Heresy, and lay themselves open to this Condemnation, who deny Jesus Christ to be their only Master, God, and Lord? *Jude 4.* Would it be at all uncharitable to tell the World, that we thus understand the sacred Scriptures? Again, what if we think we justly argue from the Baptismal Form, that such as deny the true and proper Godhead of Father, Son, or Holy Ghost, have no claim to Baptism, and so no Covenant Right to Salvation, are we at all to be blam'd, that we acquaint the World with our Apprehensions? And finally, what if we apprehend, that the Denial of the true and proper Godhead of either of the Sacred Three must unavoidably lead Persons to the Neglect of that Love, Worship, and Obedience, that are necessary to Salvation, and due to God as our Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier, or as comprehending Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; must we, thro' Fear of being uncharitable, forbear to acquaint Persons that we take this to be the Sense of Scripture?

Scripture? Yea, is it not the indispensable Duty of Ministers to tell the People, how according to them they are to understand the Sacred Writings? This is the utmost that the Assembly pretend to. What Allowances God may make to some Men they don't say. Nor how far God may regard a general Repentance for involuntary Errors they don't say. They don't pretend to determine the Everlasting Fate of this or the other particular Person. They only declare what a Risque Men run, according to them, by embracing such Errors; and this is so far from being uncharitable, that they think, they should not at such a time as this have been faithful to Christ, and to the Souls of Men, if they had not told them, that the Doctrine of the Trinity is in their Apprehensions a Fundamental Doctrine, not a suppos'd Fundamental, as Mr. P. calls it, but such as is scriptural and real.

I can't think but the Assembly had reason to say, that this Doctrine is that which the Christian Churches have agreed and centred in throughout almost all the Ages of Christianity. But Mr. P. would be glad to know, "Whether those Ages, that are excepted in the Word *almost*, are not the first and best, and more worthy to be regarded than the Antichristian Ages that followed them; and tells us, that he can't find our Faith to have been received before the fourth Century, if then, &c. p. 28, 29." I can assure Mr. P. that 'twas not intended that the first and best Ages should be excepted, but some of those Ages that succeeded the Rise of Arianism, or those Antichristian Ages that he speaks of. We mean those Ages under *Constantius* and some other Emperors, when Persons dar'd not openly profess this Doctrine, but at their utmost Peril. Mr. P. I suppose, could not be unappriz'd, that these are the Ages that we except; and I am very sorry, that he should so much as insinuate, that our Doctrine of the Trinity is an Antichristian Doctrine, or at least, that it was in an Antichristian Age that it sprang up. I hope, after this, we shall not be censur'd for groundless Jealousies concerning the Faith of some Persons; nor yet if we are afraid that Mr. P. hath departed from the Faith that is received amongst us; For if our Faith be not the Faith of the first and best Ages,
or

or that which obtain'd in the Church before the fourth Century, Charity won't allow us to suppose, that this is the Faith Mr. P. sticks to. However I can't but wonder very much, that a Man of Mr. P's. Learning and inquisitive Temper should not be able to find, that our Faith was receiv'd before the fourth Century, if then.

There is no one that reads the learned Works of S. P. K. but must allow, that he hath been a great Inquirer into Ecclesiastical Antiquity; but so far is he from being of Mr. P's Mind, that he says, that the Articles inserted in the Creed by the Apostles themselves, were the Articles of the Existence of God, the Trinity, &c. * In another Place, speaking of the *Filiation* and *Divinity* of our Saviour, he says, that this Article of the Creed hath been *coeval* with Christianity. † And the same, he says, concerning the Article of the Divinity of the *Holy Ghost*; and adds, that if so much be not said in Antiquity, concerning the *Divinity* and *Person* of the *Holy Ghost* as there is of our Saviour, 'tis because there was not so great a Controversy in the Primitive Church concerning these Things. He says of the *Macedonians*, that they were the first Hereticks, who owning the Divinity of the Son, directly attack'd that of the Holy Ghost alone. ‡ What is said by this Great Man, is also said by a great many other learned Persons. Dr. *Whitby* will be allow'd, I suppose, to have been also a great Inquirer into Primitive Antiquity. Now he assures us, in his Book *de vera Deitate Christi*, p. 59, &c. that St. *Barnabas*, *Ignatius*, *Poly carp*, *Iustin Martyr*, *Athenagoras*, *Irenaeus*, *Tertullian*, *Cyprian*, &c. do all agree in their Testimony concerning the Divinity of our Saviour. And others have made it as evident, that the Divinity of the Holy Ghost was as strongly asserted by the *Antinice* Fathers. I am sensible it may be retorted concerning Dr. *Whitby*, that he hath lately attempted to invalidate the Testimonies that are brought out of Antiquity by himself and Bp. *Bull*, to confirm us in the Belief of the Trinity :

* *Critical Hist. of the Creed*, p. 35.

† *Idem* p. 137, 138.

‡ p. 317, 318, 319.

nity : But yet, the Evidence of Truth is so strong and clear, that in the Beginning of this very Performance he tells us, that he could not thoroughly understand Dr. *Clark's* Opinion, nor yet depart from his own, *i. e.* I take it his former Opinion concerning the true Deity of Jesus Christ. And further, I think there is a great deal in what Dr. *Waterland* says of Dr. *Whitby*, in his late excellent Performance, * that there is a great deal of *Fallacy, Defect, Misquotation, Misconstruction, Misrepresentation, &c.* that runs thro' Dr. *Whitby's* late Book. And if any will give themselves the Trouble to read what this accomplish'd Author (who hath also been a great Inquirer into Antiquity) says, they'll see much reason to be satisfy'd, that the receiv'd Doctrine of the Trinity is not only supported by Scripture and Reason, but Antiquity also. I shall only mention one more, that I believe Mr. *P.* must allow to be a very great Reader, and a great Man, and that is Bp. *Burnet*, who says, † “ It is no small Confirmation of the Truth of “ this Doctrine, that we are certain it was universally “ receiv'd over the whole Christian Church, long before there was either a Christian Prince to support it “ by his Authority, or a Council to establish it by “ Consent : And indeed the Council of *Nice* did nothing but declare what was the Faith of the Christian Church, with the Addition only of the Word “ *Consubstantial* : For if all other Words of the Creed “ settled at *Nice* are acknowledg'd to be true, that of “ the Three Persons being of one Substance will follow from thence by a just Consequence. We know, “ both by what *Tertullian* and *Novatian* writ, what “ was the Faith both of the *Roman* and *African* “ Churches. From *Irenaeus* we gather the Faith both “ of the *Gallican* and the *Asiatick* Churches. And “ the whole Proceedings in the Case of *Semostatus*, “ *nus*, that was the solemnest Business that past while “ the Church was under Oppression and Persecution, “ give us the most convincing Proof possible, not only “ of the Faith of the *Eastern* Churches at that time, “ but

* *Waterland's Vindication of Christ's Divinity*, p. 399, &c. † *Expos. of the Articles*, &c. p. 40.

“ but of their Zeal likewise in watching against every Breach that was made in so sacred a Part of their *Trust and Depositum*.” ’Tis evident by what I have said, that other great Men can find in Antiquity what Mr. P. can’t. Nor can I find, that even Dr. Clark and Mr. Whiston have by all their Skill been able to disprove what these say. But I have no Intention to offer any more concerning the Sense of the best Ages of Christianity. We have no further Reverence for any, how ancient soever, than they are guided by Scripture. To these, and not to Fathers, and Agreement of Churches, we direct our People, and by these would we have them to form their Notions. However, it can’t but be some Satisfaction to us, when there is a Harmony between us and the best Ages of the Christian Church.

I can’t be sure, how probable soever it may seem, that ’tis Mr. P’s Design in his next Paragraph, p. 29. to insinuate that we are as much mistaken as to the *Credenda* of Religion, or Articles of Faith, as the *Antinomians* are as to the *Agenda*, or Rules of Practice. If this be intended, ’twill follow, I think, that we can no more be saved if we act consistently with our own Principles, than an *Antinomian* can if he acts by his, which deny the Necessity of Repentance and Holiness, as the Conditions of Blessedness. I hope we have said nothing more uncharitable than this, if this be Mr. P’s Meaning. And if the Doctrine of the Trinity be really so dangerous to the Souls of Men, ’tis high time, as Mr. P. speaks, that there should be a new Reformation. And I wonder that a Man of his Spirit and Sense hath not been more open and active in it: But we can’t yet be convinc’d that there is any Occasion for it in this Respect, but conclude, and we hope upon sure Grounds, that we have been contending for the Faith that was at first deliver’d to the Saints, the Faith in which we trust many Millions have been saved according to the Gospel Direction, and more will. And we chus’d to express our selves thus, to shew that we are not inclin’d to set up as Judges of those that differ from us, tho’ at the same time we can’t help concluding, that they hold very dangerous and pernicious Errors.

'Tis on the Account of these Errors, that we think with Concern on the sad Estate of the Church of God in our Day. These have occasion'd the Factions and Divisions, and uncharitable Zeal that Mr. P. complains of, p. 29. and are to be found among Christians. Before these sprung up, and troubled the Churches, there was never a more perfect Harmony among Dissenters. 'Tis since Dr. *Clark*, Mr. *Whiston*, &c. have writ against the Trinity, that there have been such loud Complaints against Imposition and Persecution, about School Terms, and new Articles of Faith. Before these new Lights brake forth, we were thought to keep to the Simplicity of the Gospel, to teach no other Doctrines than what are taught in Scripture. And if we may judge by Mr. P.'s own Writings and Discourses, we may believe that even he himself would formerly have spoke in the very Language of the Assembly; call'd these Notions that are new vented unsound Doctrines, very repugnant to the *Mystery of Godliness, God manifest in the Flesh*. This is the Scripture Mystery that some oppose, and we contend for; and therefore it can't be difficult to determine whether they, or we, have contributed most to the Calamities of the Church of God, till it can be better prov'd than it hath been, that those Doctrines are Mistakes that we were in the peaceable Possession of, or that our blessed Saviour is only an inferior subordinate Deity.

We can't help thinking with St. *Paul* of our blessed Saviour, *That he is God over all, blessed for evermore*, and that he, together with the Father, and the H. Ghost, are the one God whom Christians are oblig'd to love and worship. They are represented in Scripture as having the same glorious Perfections, as doing the same Works, and acting in the most perfect Harmony. On such Accounts we conclude them to be the one God. And therefore, how marvellous soever it may seem to Mr. P. p. 30; yet to others it most plainly appears that the Unity of the Godhead is struck at, by making our Saviour and the H. Ghost to be only inferior and subordinate Beings. 'Tis undeniable that these have the Stile, Title, and Character of God in the sacred Writings. And if these are some of the

Gods many, as Mr. P. seems to insinuate, that the Apostle would exclude from the Unity of the Godhead, when he says, that they are Christians of St. Paul's sort, to whom there is but one God the Father, 1 Cor. 8. 6. I would fain know whether, according to the Apostle, they are any better than Idols, and such as are *Nothing in the World*. I think 'tis clear, and out of all Controversy, that the Apostle in that Chapter is speaking of Heathen Idols, and that he no more excludes the Son and H. Ghost from being the one God, than he doth the Father in the Words that follow from being the *one Lord*. And such an Insinuation, I think, as puts the Son and the H. Ghost upon a Level with the Heathen Idols, is sufficiently derogatory to the Honour of both. The Assembly, I hope, have neither said, or insinuated any thing so derogatory to the Honour of the Father; if they speak of the Son and H. Ghost as equal to him, 'tis because they think the general Tenour of the Bible (to use Mr. P.'s Phrase) looks plainly this way; nor is it with them any Proof to the contrary, that God sent his Son into the World, and that both Father and Son are said to send the H. Ghost. This is fairly consistent with the Equality we speak of, and imports no such Subordination of Nature and Perfections as some contend for.

If Mr. P. can be sure for himself and Brethren, that they are not departed from the Unity of the Faith throughout the Churches, or renounc'd any Principle of our common Christianity, as he says, p. 30. we are very glad if it appear that we have not lost those who have very valuable Abilities, both natural and acquir'd, to do a great deal of Service in the Church of Christ, and as much Right as other Persons to fix what the Principles of common Christianity are. We are entirely satisfy'd that the Doctrine of the Trinity as held by us is one of those Principles. We don't desire that Persons should take it upon our bare Word that it is such; nor would we that People take it upon Mr. P.'s Word that it is not, till he hath prov'd, as well as suggested, that the present Unity of the Churches, as to this Doctrine, is not a scriptural Unity, and that the Churches of Christ, from the Beginning
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of Christianity have been mistaken as to this grand Article of their Faith.

The Assembly and Mr. P. have the Happiness of agreeing in the next Head of Advice. But for this, I must believe we are oblig'd to a suppos'd Advantage that Mr. P. thinks he hath, p. 31. from the Apostle's Words of lashing the Assembly as *Creed-Makers* and Supplanters of the Apostolical Doctrine. I am very sure we are as willing as any can be to make the Apostle's Doctrine the Test of Truth. We are not sensible that we have any Creed our selves that is contrary to this Doctrine, nor would we make any such for other Persons: But 'tis easy for any to insinuate things that they can't prove, and for want of Arguments to give Names of Reproach. To call Men *Persecutors*, *Imposers*, *Creed-Makers*, is a sufficient Confutation of the Doctrine of the Trinity with some Men. Let any thing be prov'd upon us, by which we have supplanted the Apostolical Doctrine, and we are ready to renounce it. What the Apostle offers in the Passage quoted by Mr. P. is we think far from being a Confutation of the received Doctrine. We never denied that Christ had a Head over him, consider'd as *Man* and *Mediator*: But if we consider him in the *Form of God*, so he never thought it to be any Robbery to be equal with God. In this Sense he and the Father are one, and not greater or less than one another.

What Strefs as to the Proof of the Doctrine of the Trinity is to be laid on the Baptismal Form I have already consider'd, and by what hath been briefly offer'd to this Purpose, 'tis I hope evident that this is not such an obscure Revelation of the Doctrine of the Trinity, as Mr. P. would have it. And besides, he must know that there are a Multitude of other Passages of Scripture that we build our Faith, as to the proper Divinity of our Saviour and the H. Ghost, upon. Nor is it any Argument that we are mistaken, that he gives us the hard Name of merciless Men. We make no Terms of Salvation for other Persons. We only declare what we think a merciful God requires. And if less will satisfy Mr. P. than will satisfy us, we must leave him to stand or fall to his own Master, who knows how to have Compassion not only on those that are ignorant,

rant, but those who, notwithstanding their great Knowledge, *may be out of the Way.*

Mr. P. can't but allow, *p. 32.* that there are Mysteries of an unsearchable Depth in the Divine Nature. We can't by searching find out God, we can't find out the Almighty to Perfection. For which reason we desire that all charitable Allowances may be made to us, and we are willing to make the same to other Persons. We would not be rash in judging any, not those that say with Mr. P. they are persuaded, *there is to Christians but one God the Father*, but will not say that the Son is God, and the Holy Ghost God in the same Sense. Whatever Mystery there may be in this, we don't think, that any thing is more clearly revealed in the sacred Scriptures. And when we say that they are God, we understand by the Term, the same that we do when we say the Father is God, *viz.* That as the Father hath the most glorious Perfections ascrib'd to him, so hath the Son, and so hath the Holy Ghost. In this we think the Scripture is most clear, and yet have Charity for those that can't think as we do. And farther, we are under no doubt, but that *as there are three that bear Record in Heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, so these three are one*: Nor is it owing to any additional Improvements of Convocations and Assemblies as Mr. P. suggests, *p. 33.* but as we think to the Revelations of God himself, that we thus believe. We are led to such a Faith by the express Declarations of Scripture, and by those high and magnificent Things that are there said of our Saviour and the Holy Ghost, which we apprehend can't with any Truth or Propriety be ascrib'd to any but the supreme God. These Things we think are so clearly reveal'd in Scripture, and of such vast Importance in Religion, that tho' we have never so much Charity for those that have other Apprehensions; yet we can't encourage their Ministry, by Ordination, or Recommendation, because we think, that this would be to do an irreparable Mischief to the Church of Christ. And tho' they may Censure us as refusing them, because they can't swallow the Mysteries that we would obtrude upon their Understandings; yet this, like other Calumnies, to which we have of late been much accusom'd,

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is without all Foundation. If we reject any, 'tis not because they can't allow of any mysterious unsearchable Unity in the Divine Nature, but because they won't allow our Saviour and the Holy Ghost as supreme God. And if we can't think of the Rejection of these Articles of our Faith, as some do; yet we think of them according to the best Light we have. And as we never scruple to allow it to others, so we hope that others will allow it to us, *that we be fully persuaded in our own Minds.*

I wonder that Mr. P. should be so much out of Temper, p. 33, at the Word *Subsistence*. Do the Assembly lay the least stress upon this Word? have they urg'd it upon the Conscience of any Person? do they expect that any should make it a Part of their Creed? have they ever manifested the least Fondness for the Word? and what Occasion was there then, so solemnly to bespeak the Attention of the People, and to make such a frightful Exclamation as Mr. P. doth? "Christians, let me engage you to pause a little, and adore the Goodness of God, &c. What a miserable Wretch must I have been, if when God had given me an Understanding of my own, &c. I must have been left to the Mercy of Men, and been for ever condemn'd, unless I could receive this absurd and unintelligible Language of the Schools? and make that a Part of my Creed, which God has never declar'd, and which the Men, who would urge it upon my Conscience, can't tell how to explain?" Would not any conclude from this moving Language, if they had not seen our Account, that we were about to tear up the very *Foundations* of Christianity, and to set the *Schoolmen* upon the *Apostles* and *Prophets*? And yet after all, 'tis only for a single Word, on which we build nothing at all, that we are made such heinous Offenders. How happy is it for the Assembly, that they did not use more than these two offensive Words, Person and Subsistence? And how strange is it, that we should be clamour'd so often about the former, and hear of the latter with such Surprise and Astonishment, when we lay no manner of Stress upon one, and so little upon the other, that we have declar'd we could be as well satisfied in another

another Form that we have added, where the Word Person is not? Let me also in my Turn engage Christians to pause a little, and consider, how much Mr. P. must be dispos'd to quarrel, that he makes such a Noise about Nothing.

I am glad, I can find Mr. P. a little more calm in this Paragraph, and to allow that he can believe what God hath reveal'd, when the manner of the Thing is past his Understanding. Indeed, I don't see how he could forbear allowing thus much, unless he had perfect adequate Ideas of all Things, and had an Understanding that could be the Measure of all Truth. However I scarce thought he would make such a Concession as this. I hope, in time he will allow, seeing 'tis reveal'd in Scripture both directly and by Consequence, that the Father is God, and the Son God, and the Holy Ghost God; that they all may be God in the highest Sense, and yet but one God; seeing if we receive the Scripture, we should presently fall into the Belief thereof, were we once able clearly to comprehend the Manner, or how this might be. What Mr. P. would be at in his Parenthesis, p. 34. I don't understand, nor what his Notion is about the Incarnation of the *Word*. There are some, I know, that say, that Christ hath three Natures, Divine, Superangelical, and Humane, and that the Divine assum'd the Superangelical before the World was, and that both in time were united to the Humane. If this Notion be Scriptural, 'twill perhaps solve some Difficulties about our Saviour's Mission, &c. But this I suppose can't be Mr. P.'s Notion; nor is it to my present purpose to determine the Truth or Falshood of this Opinion. If we say with Mr. P. that we can give no Account of Christ's emptying himself, and how he parted with his Glory, we may in the general believe, that he did this in some Sense or other, because 'tis so declar'd, and yet place the Incarnation, as most Divines have done, in his being related to the humane Nature. And where we should place it, unless in his *partaking of Flesh and Blood*, as the Apostle speaks, or in his coming to *Tabernacle in Flesh*, I confess, I do not understand. I have no Difference with Mr. P. about the receiving of humane Mysteries in
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Religion : But if he hereby intends, that the received Doctrine of the Trinity is such, I can't help being of another Opinion. This I take to be part of the *Mystery of the Faith*, which I desire ever to hold with a good Conscience.

What the Assembly believe to be sound Summaries of Faith don't appear to be otherwise by any thing Mr. P. hath offer'd. The Assembly have as great a Veneration for the Words of the Holy Ghost, as any can have, and are sorry, that by the wresting of these Words there should be any Occasion for the Use of others : But I think however, that our *Sermons* will prove, as well as our *Creeds*, that we don't take them for the Rule of Faith and Life ; both prove it alike, but neither prove it at all. But to satisfy Mr. P. at once that we do, I can assure him that we are ready to renounce all Articles, Creeds, Catechisms, that shall appear to be contrary to the Scriptures, and that we value them for no other Reason, but because we think them to be agreeable thereto. And this is sufficient to shew, that we are not gone off from the only sufficient Principle of our first Reformation, and that we don't need a new one. I must be free to own (being constrain'd by many Passages in this Performance) that I think this is said rather from a Perswasion, that we don't take the Scriptures aright, than that we don't take them for our Rule : But before we set about a new Reformation, we expect to have more offer'd for our Conviction, and in the mean time we shall harmonize with the Reformed Churches, tho' Mr. P. can't, and shall esteem it our Happiness that we do. I am sincerely sorry, that the Churches should lose one of his Sense and Learning on such an Occasion : But if he should not return to us again, God can raise up others of equal Abilities to maintain his Truth, and vindicate his Cause.

I have now finish'd my Observations on Mr. P's Remarks on the Assemblies Letter, and shall, with him, willingly leave it to the Reader to consider whether the Cause of the *Arians*, *Socinians*, and other *Antitrinitarians*, hath not been more effectually serv'd by him, than that of the *Papists* hath by the Assembly ; and whether his Performance doth not better deserve to be
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printed at *Racovia*, than ours at *Rome*. The Charges that are sum'd up here have been consider'd, and I can't doubt but all unprejudic'd Persons will be easily satisfied, that those of an implicate Faith, and a Popish Inquisition, &c. are only popular *Clamours*, design'd its likely to be the *Shibboleths* of the Party, and calculated to raise Mens Indignation against us, by means of that just Abhorrence that Men have of Popery, its *Principles* and *Practices*. Mr. P. one would think must know, that there is nothing in the Accusations. And tho' he is pleas'd to complement himself and his own Party, as if none had Reason and Scripture on their Side besides them; yet I can't see, but by the help of these, we have hitherto been able to stand our Ground against these mighty Men, without any Assistance from a Secular Power, and humbly hope we ever shall, how little soever we may seem in Mr. P.'s Eyes, or those of any of the Writers on the *Arian* Side, with whom it seems to be a *common Talent* to treat all those with Haughtiness and Disdain, that can't think and write as they do. If Mr. P. be threaten'd with a Secular Power, I am very sure 'tis not by the Assembly. We can't think so meanly of our Cause, as to believe there is any Occasion for it. Had we been fond of being back'd by a Secular Power, we have it already sufficiently on our Side to have oblig'd some to have spoken a little more decently of the Doctrine of the Trinity, than they have done of late. The unpunish'd Insolence of many that I could name, will be Demonstration on our Side, that the Outcry of Persecution, and what we would farther do, if we had it in our Power, is a furious Noise and nothing more. We have it already in our Power, by the Law against *Blasphemy*, to teach some to speak in other and more modest Language than they do; and till we bring that Law to bear upon some, I question whether we are not much more remote from Persecution, than some would be if they had such an Advantage in their Hands against us, as we have against them. But let this be as it will, Mr. P. I believe, must know, that the Charge of Persecution against us can't be maintain'd: But this, like other Things, is popular, and will serve a Turn; and therefore how unjust soever it may be,

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yet, to furnish the Party with something odious against us, it shall pass. There is as little Reason for this, as there is for that other very modest Accusation, that Ignorance is with the Assembly the Mother of Devotion. What will not some Men say, when heated and in a Passion? I thought all would allow, that some Books are so very bad, that it is not safe for all to read them; nor, can I think, that Mr. P. would advise all his People to read all the Books that have been writ in favour of Atheism and Deism. Not that there is any thing in them that can't be answer'd and confuted, but many Things unhappily calculated to do Mischief. Mr. P. can't complain, I suppose, that any of his own Books have been neglected, and I may even venture to assure him that they won't; we have, and shall have all the Light that these afford: And what would he expect more, when 'tis likely he would think it an Injury, and perhaps very justly, if he should not be thought as wise and learned as any of the Party?

I have done with Mr. P.'s Advice to the Reader, and come to consider what he says of the *Postscript*, that concludes our Account. And here, as if he had forgot at once all his Remarks, and what he had said just before in the same Page, he falls into a strange *Fit of Charity* towards the Assembly, and can't tell how to suppose, "that the Assembly could be guilty of such gross *Prevarication* as appears in this *Postscript*, "but that the Editor hath here added something of "his own." Now I confess, I thought that hardly any thing was too black to be suppos'd of the Assembly, at least, that *Prevarication* was not, when they had been charg'd before with Hypocrisy, Tyranny, with Injustice, Violence, gross Falshoods, &c. yea, 'tis certain, that Mr. P. can suppose this very thing of the Assembly, which he says, he can't tell how to suppose: For why else should he say, p. 36, where he is still speaking of this *Postscript*, that they have finish'd their exquisite Performance, in a Manner that will not much recommend it to Persons of Integrity? If the Assembly can't be guilty of adding such a *Postscript*, why should the Blame of it be laid upon them and not upon the Editor? The Case seems to be, for some

Reasons Mr. P. can think fit to charge the Assembly with the Postscript, and for some not. It looks by all his Performance, that he could have laid it to the Assembly without any Difficulty; and by the Conclusion of his Performance, that he is willing they should take the Blame of it: But then, he should not have had such a fair Opportunity to single out the Editor, and expose him at parting. 'Tis very obvious that the Editor had made himself so obnoxious by his zealous Appearance for the Doctrine of the Trinity, that Mr. P. seems resolv'd to have a particular *Fling* at him. But that which I wonder at is, (when Mr. P. knows the Editor so well, and how much it is his Practice to speak plainly and freely, without Fear or Flattery, and knows 'tis likely too that if he hath offended him, or made others his Enemies, 'tis by his plain speaking and plain dealing) that he should of all things charge him with Prevarication, a Crime which (through the great Goodness of God) he hath no worldly Reasons to tempt him to, and which his known Conduct might have led any charitable Person to call the Fault in the Postscript, if any, by any other Name, rather than this.

But to consider the Charge it self. And here 'tis certain that there was no manner of reason to prevaricate in this Matter, because 'tis strictly true that there are several Candidates that do concur with the Assembly in their declar'd Sentiments concerning the Trinity. One whose Ordination was appointed at the Assembly, another, who told me he intended to be ordain'd in a very little time, and some of whom I had certain Information before the Postscript was made, that they agree with us. So that, if any such Motion had been made by the Editor (who is the worthy Member Mr. P. speaks of how ironically every Body is sensible) and not comply'd with by the Candidates, the Postscript might have been express'd otherwise, and answer'd the End as well for which it was intended when the Thing was true. But the Motion itself, which is the thing Mr. P. chiefly insists on, I most solemnly declare I remember'd nothing of when the Postscript was made, which was but the next Morning; nor did those Ministers, to whom the Postscript was shewn, tell me any thing of such a Motion of mine

mine, which I believe they would have been so friendly as to do, had they known any thing of it. Nor can I, upon the strictest Recollection of all that I said or did at the Assembly, remember now that I made such a Motion, or that it was made by any other Person. When I was interrogated about it before I had seen Mr. P.'s Remarks, or knew that any thing would be made of it, I deny'd it without Hesitation, firmly believing that I had offer'd no such thing. And as for the reason that is given why their Names are not inserted, 'tis the very reason that one gave (who hath subscrib'd with Mr. P.) at the *September* Assembly, when I own I did motion that the Candidates should make a Declaration of their Faith. I was then told, that seeing the Candidates had no Votes, 'twas unreasonable to expect such a Declaration. I was satisfy'd with what was said, and dropt my Motion at that time, and went to the *May* Assembly with a full Resolution, that the Candidates, who never had, should have no Concern, upon this Occasion, in our Transactions, if I could help it. Further, Since I saw Mr. P.'s Remarks, I have ask'd the Moderator, whose particular Business it is to observe what is offer'd, whether any such Proposal was made by me, and am told by him, that he is as certain as he can be of a Negative, that no such Motion was made by me; and the same I am told by other Brethren. And further, I have not the least Notion that any such thing was offer'd to the Candidates by any other Member. So that if the Person, or Persons, should not be mistaken that gave Mr. P. his Information, (which yet 'tis possible they may as well as I and many others) the most that can be made of it to my Prejudice (if I may be believ'd when I say that I remember nothing of what is said to be offer'd to the Candidates, and their Refusal) is, that through a strange Forgetfulness, and without a Possibility of serving any valuable Design, but what might have been serv'd as well without it, I have not been so consistent with myself as an Author should be. The World I hope will excuse me for this, and Mr. P. I hope will the more easily pardon me, because he makes a Shew of excusing the Assembly from this Postscript, and yet in effect chargeth it upon them in

the next Page. 'Tis possible that this might spring from Forgetfulness ; I do most solemnly assure Mr. P. and the World that mine did, if his Information be right ; and therefore shall hope that my Character is such with Persons of Integrity, that such an involuntary Mistake, if any, will not be able to lessen it : But however, most of the Subscribers must be clear, if I can't.

I am somewhat at a Loss how to understand Mr. P.'s Conclusion, but fancy he designs it as Advice to the Assembly, and as a sort of a Complement on himself and Brethren, as if they were as much in the right as the Apostles themselves. Could we be convinc'd by any thing that they should be pleas'd to say that it was really so, we should not only *let them alone* to propagate their Notions as much as possible, but join with them : But whether we have any Satisfaction as to this or no, we shall yet do them no manner of Violence ; only we can't, under our present Apprehensions, *cease to teach and preach Jesus Christ* in the Manner that we have, and *shall rejoice whenever we are counted worthy to suffer Shame for his Name*, Acts 5. 41, 42.





B R I E F
ANIMADVERSIONS

O N A
P A P E R *Subscrib'd*

B Y T H O S E
Who would not Subscribe
according to the V O T E of the
A S S E M B L Y.



Apprehend that one principal Design of this Paper is to satisfy the World that the Subscribers are no *Arians*, and such as deny the *Divinity* of our Blessed Saviour: I am glad that they so far approve of what the Assembly have done, as to think it reasonable to purge themselves of a Charge that lay against them and us. They were, no doubt, at liberty to do this in the Manner they thought best: But seeing (to use Mr.

Peirce's

Peirce's Phrase) they are become *Authors*, and made every one a Judge of what they have done; I hope I may, without Offence, take the same Freedom to publish my *Animadversions* on their Paper, that Mr. P. hath to publish his *Remarks* on the Assembly's Proceedings.

These Ministers then declare, that whereas it hath been reported that some Protestant Dissenting Ministers are Arians, &c. these Reports as to them are false and slanderous, &c. Now that there is a Sense in which they are not Arians, I must believe is true, because they so solemnly declare it. And particularly, I can't think that any of these *Subscribers* do hold all those monstrous, absurd, and blasphemous Opinions that *Arius* and some of his Followers did at first. Those that receive the whole of *Arianism*, or *Arianism* as it was vented in the Beginning, don't only deny that the Son of God is *Consubstantial* and *Coeternal* with the Father, but also say, That tho' he be perfectly like the Father, yet he is of a distinct inferior Nature; That tho' he be in some Sense a Partaker of the Father's Divinity, yet he is not strictly and essentially God. Yea, some have gone so far as to say, that tho' Christ be not a *Creature* like other Creatures, made mediately by the *λόγος*; yet notwithstanding he is a *Creature* of the Father's, and far inferior to him in *Knowledge*, *Wisdom*, *Power*, and other *Perfections*. Nay, some have gone further still, and maintain'd that the Son is not like the Father, but in *Nature* and *Substance* like other Creatures. That he was made out of nothing as other Creatures were, and created in time just as other Creatures, and that there was a time when he was not. They say also that he is mutable like other Creatures, and that it is owing to the *Decree* of God that he is not subject to change. They say, that like other Creatures, he hath a finite Knowledge, and that he neither perfectly knows Himself, or the Father, and that he is entirely dependant on the Father for all that he hath and is. And lastly, some have gone so far as to say that he was made purely for the sake of other things, and but a little before the World. These we are told are the *Lengths* that *Arius* himself and some of his Followers went at first; but that when they found that this would not go down with serious Christians, that,

that most of them in Words retracted several of these Opinions, and stuck chiefly to this, that the Son was not *Consubstantial* and *Coeternal* with the Father, but inferiour to him in *Nature, Attributes* and *Perfections*. Of this sort were most of the *Arians*, except those that were called *Anomæans*; and this is that which *Arius* himself did with most Certainty stick to. 'Tis plain I think from this, that *Arianism* is an *Equivocal* Word, and does not always signify the same thing. And therefore, the *Subscribers* of this Paper, if they would have satisfy'd the World, that they are *Arians* in no Sense, which yet I observe they don't say, they should I think have declar'd, not only that they don't deny the Divinity of our blessed Saviour; for this *Arius* himself did not in Words; but also that they don't deny him to have such a *Divinity* as the Father hath; That they don't deny him to be *Consubstantial* and *Coeternal* with the Father, and that they don't look upon him to be inferiour to the Father in *Nature, Attributes, and Perfections*. In a very proper, tho' not in the largest and very worst, Sense, these I think are *Arians*, that deny our Saviour to be *Essentially* God, or God by *Nature*, and thus *Consubstantial* and *Coeternal* with the Father. And that, tho' they won't say, that our Saviour is ἐξ ὧν ὄντων, or things that are not, they may notwithstanding be *Arians*, if they say, that he is inferiour to the Father in *Nature, Attributes, and Perfections*.

Had the *Subscribers* of this Paper offer'd any thing, whereby we might be induc'd to believe, that they look upon the *Father, Son, and Holy Ghost*, to be the one God, the same in Substance, equal in Power and Glory, 'twould have given Satisfaction, that they understand the Scriptures they quote otherwise than the *Arians* do: But instead of this, they tell us, "They hold fast the Form of sound Words, and believe all that the Scriptures say concerning the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, and particularly that such and such Scriptures do belong to our Saviour." And did they ever know that *Arian* that would not say the very same thing? So that after all, we have only their Word for it, that they are not *Arians*; and this would have been sufficient, if the Word was not
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of various Significations ; but in this Paper, for ought we know, it may signify no more than this, that they don't hold all the foremention'd Errors of *Arius* and his Followers ; That they are not such *Arians* as were the *Anomæans* and *Excucontii* among the Antients. And if this be their Meaning, that they are no *Arians* in this large Sense, I am apt to think, that they were never suspected to be such : But if they had a Mind that the World should be satisfy'd, I think, with Submission, their better Way had been to offer something to shew their Dislike of *Arianism*, that no *Arian* would have declar'd. And particularly, if they had said, as the *London Nonsubscribers* do ; * That tho' for some Reasons they refus'd to subscribe the first Article of the Church of *England*, yet they could subscribe it with a safe Conscience ; or if they had said, as a *Committee* of the Nonsubscribing Ministers do, † That tho' they would only subscribe the Words of *Scripture*, yet in their Sentiments concerning the Doctrine of the *Trinity*, there was a professed Agreement with those that subscrib'd the first Article, and the Answers in the Assembly's Catechism. If they had said so much as this, which no *Arian*, that makes any Conscience of what he says, will or can say, they would have said something to Satisfaction ; whereas they now leave us as far from Satisfaction, and as much in the dark, as we were before.

The Proof that these Ministers bring to prove that they are no *Arians*, is just such another as *Arius* himself, if alive, would have brought to prove that he was no *Heretick*. I don't find, that he ever question'd either the *Authority* of those Texts that are subscrib'd, or whether they are to be apply'd to our Blessed Saviour : But then every body knows, that they did put a different Sense upon them from what others did ; and this, for ought we know, may be the Case with those *Subscribers*. I am apt to think, that if they had fallen under a Suspicion of *Papery*, as they have of *Arianism*, they would not have thought it sufficient

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* *Authentick Account*, p. 25.
Reasons, p. 6.

† *Reply to the Subscribing Ministers*

to declare that they are no *Papists*, and quoted those Texts, that we think are level'd against *Papists*; but have satisfy'd the World, by some Explication or other of those Texts, that they don't understand them as the *Papists* do. If they had done the same in our present Circumstances, they might have quieted the Minds of their People and others, retriev'd the Reputation of *Dissenters*, done much to heal those unhappy Breaches that are amongst us, and to restore that blessed Harmony that hath been the Glory of *Dissenters* in these Parts for so many Years. And can any think, that these valuable Ends would not have been pursu'd by the *Subscribers* of this Paper, if they might with Honour and a good Conscience? especially when the Assembly had no Concern therein; when they might have done it with the same Freedom, as when in Preaching they deliver their own Sense of any Text in Scripture, and without so much as seeming to own the Authority, which they suggest we assume, tho' we do not. Won't every Body imagine, when they were thus free, and might have serv'd such important Ends, that the Reason why they did not, was, because they could not?

If the chief Reason why they don't subscribe afresh unto humane Forms is, because "they are very tender" of doing that which may seem to derogate from the "Sufficiency of Scripture, and the Regard they owe to Christ as Head of the Church:" They don't think, I suppose, that 'tis any Derogation to the Sufficiency of Scripture, to teach their People in their Sermons, how they are to understand the Scriptures; nor any Disregard to the Authority of Christ, to tell them how they are to understand his Mind and Will. If they had done this, which they might have done without owning any humane Authority in Matters of Conscience, it would have given as much Satisfaction to most, as if they had subscrib'd the Articles of the Church of England, or the Answers in the Assemblies Catechism: But farther, if it was a Derogation from the Sufficiency of Scripture, or a Disregard to the Authority of Christ to subscribe humane Forms, they should at first have refus'd to subscribe them at all, as they do to subscribe them afresh. I believe their Notions of the Sufficien-

cy of Scripture, and the Authority of Christ, were the same then that they are now: But it may justly be made a Question, whether their Notions of *Christ's Divinity*, and that of the *Holy Ghost*, and their being one God with the *Father*, are the same now as when they subscrib'd. What hurt had there been else to tell the World, as many of the *London Nonsubscribers* do, in whose Reasons against subscribing they acquiesce, that they have not chang'd their former *Sentiments*, but could subscribe them with as safe a Conscience now, as they did then? But as they say nothing like this, so neither do they say any thing at all what they believe concerning the *Holy Ghost*. How this came to be omitted, when the Controversy also is about his *Divinity*, they can best tell; at least, I believe Mr. P. can, who, I presume, was chief *Director* in this Affair. I am not against their paying a due *Deference* to his Judgment; but a *blind Deference* to any Man's superior Sense, in a Case of such importance, is too much for *Ministers*, for Men of *Sense* and *Learning*, and such as seem to value themselves upon a *Freedom of Thought*. And if they have contented themselves to say nothing particularly, even in Scripture Words, without Explanation of the *Holy Ghost*, out of *Complaisance* to him, I think they have carried the *Complement* a great deal too far, and expos'd themselves, to oblige him.

These *Subscribers* say, "they are fully satisfy'd in the Reasons given against making such Subscriptions by their Brethren of *London*, in their *Authentic Account*, &c." I suppose they mean in some of their Reasons, because some of them are peculiar to themselves; and as to those that are not thus peculiar, I don't see how they should much influence them, unless they can speak as the *London Nonsubscribers* do. And can the *Ministers* that subscribe this Paper say, as these Brethren 'at *London* do, * "That they never taught any thing like *Arianism*, and that they have taken all proper Occasions to offer their Reasons against it, and that not only from the Pulpit, but some of them from the Press, and that they have sufficiently

* *Authen. Account*, p. 22.

" sufficiently guarded against all Suspicion of *Arianism*
 " in their publick Ministrations?" Can they farther
 say, as these *Nonsubscribers* do, * " that as subscribing
 " the first Article is made a necessary Condition of
 " exercising their publick Ministry, so they should be
 " highly blameable to neglect that Work, by refusing
 " to comply with what is requir'd of them, when
 " they can do it with a safe Conscience." Can most
 of these *Subscribers* venture to intimate, as these *Nonsub-*
scribers do, that they have the same Faith and Opinion
 concerning the *Trinity*, that the *Subscribers* have? † I am
 perswaded, that most, if not all the Ministers that
 subscribe this Paper, will no more venture to say this,
 than they will to say, that the Doctrines of *Transub-*
stantiation, *Purgatory*, &c. are Scripture Doctrines.
 There must several of them know, that they can be
 easily confuted should they say such Things. And
 therefore, seeing they say, they are satisfied in the
 Reasons, &c. it must be in these, that seem to charge
 the *Subscribers* with being *Imposers*, and paying a new
 and unwarrantable Regard to the Assemblies Catechism,
 &c. And if these be the Reasons they are so satisfied
 in, it shews, that in some things they can be very ea-
 sily satisfied.

There is no one, I dare say, that reads this Passage,
 but would conclude, that they can say all that the
London Nonsubscribers do: But if some few can, I am
 pretty sure, that the leading Men amongst them can't;
 and least of all can Mr. P. say this, till he hath unsaid
 a great many things in his *Remarks* on our Proceedings.
 I can't tell, by whom it is charg'd upon them, that
 they baptize only in the Name of the Father: But if
 they have the same Notions of the *Baptismal Form* that
 Mr. P. seems to have, they don't understand it as
 others do; but think that this *Form* may be us'd by
 those that look upon the *Son* to be inferior in *Nature*,
Attributes and *Perfections* to the Father, as do the *Arians*;
 and that look upon the *Holy Ghost* to be inferior to
 both, as do the *Arians* and *Macedonians*. Their bap-

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* *Antien. Account*, p. 25, 26.

† p. 28.

tizing therefore in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost will only prove, that they don't reject the Scriptural Form of Baptism; but it won't follow from this, that they don't reject what is signify'd by this Form. Who they are, that have spread groundless and malicious Stories about these Ministers I can't say. Those that have are answerable for it. I am sure the subscribing Ministers did rejoice in their Reputation and Usefulness. And they earnestly desire, that it may please God, that they may unite with us again, that we may together carry on the Cause of Christianity with our former Harmony. I am not without Hope, that some of them at least will. For our own sake, and theirs, as well as for that of Truth and Peace, we should rejoice exceedingly in this. The Lord of his infinite Mercy grant, that both Truth and Peace may prevail in our Days.

If the Assembly are at all concern'd in Mr. P.'s Postscript, it must be in the two last Paragraphs, in which there is nothing relating to us, but what hath been already consider'd. What concerns his Birth and Education, his Tutors and Studies, and the Respect that he had Abroad and at Home from learned Men, 'tis nothing to us. I don't at all question the Truth of it. And if some may think that there may be a little too much Vanity in the Representation; yet this I can easily excuse. I wish he may always employ his Advantages and Abilities for the Honour of his great Master, and I hope I shan't be one of those that envy him, tho' his Character should shine with never so much Brightness. I assure him, I never believ'd any thing of the senseless Story of his being a Jesuit, &c. Nor do I know so much as one of my Brethren that ever did believe it.





POSTSCRIPT, &c.

THE Reverend Mr. *George Jacomb* hath thought fit to take Occasion, from a short Passage in the true Account of what was transacted in the Assembly at *Exon*, to write a large Pamphlet in Vindication of himself, in Opposition to the Resolution of the Assembly. I have endeavoured in my Answer to Mr. P.'s Remarks, to shew the *Equity, Reasonableness*, and present *Necessity* of that Resolution, and have therein, I hope, sufficiently obviated most of the Reasonings of Mr. J. in this Pamphlet. The most, I think, of what he offers himself, and from others, amounts to this, that the Words of the *Holy Ghost* are the fittest and best to express our Faith in: And that therefore no others ought to be us'd, how much soever these are wrested and abus'd, and though contrary Senses are put upon them, and that no *Interpretation* of these Words may be insisted on. Now I take it to be allow'd on all Sides, that the Words of the *H. Ghost*, when taken according to their proper and native Signification and Meaning, are the fittest and best. And farther, these Words are so full and plain in asserting that great Doctrine concerning the *Trinity*, that I wonder the Truth of it should be call'd in Question by any that own the Authority of Scripture, and profess to take it for the Rule of their Faith: But many have taken such a *Liberty* of late to interpret the *Scriptures* contrary to their most obvious Sense and Meaning; and these *Interpretations* have met with so much Applause, that the *Interpretations* of Dr. Clark with some, and of Mr. *Whiston*, and Mr. *Emlyn* with others, have pass'd as the only solid and rational Interpretations of Scripture, whilst those have been rejected with Scorn and *Disdain*, that the Church hath been in Possession of

of from its first Ages. This hath occasion'd a great deal of unhappy Difference both in the *Church* and among *Dissenters*. And tho' Mr. F. would insinuate throughout his Performance, that the Question between him and the Assembly is like that between us and the *Papists*, whether the Scripture be the Rule, and the only Rule of Faith and Manners; yet 'tis certain, that this is not the Question, but is what is allow'd of all sides; and to suggest the contrary, and that our Assembly don't own the *Scriptures* as the Rule of their Faith, is, to say the softest thing of it, a most unfriendly *Abuse*. There's not one of the Subscribers but will own this. And if this had been the Question, there would have been no Difficulty on our Side. The grand Question is about the *Sense* and *Meaning* of this Rule. Dr. Clark and the Writers on the *Arian* Side say, it must be interpreted so, as that our *Blessed Saviour* and the *Holy Ghost* ought to be look'd upon as no other than Inferiour Subordinate Beings. The *Church of England* and *Dissenters*, with the rest of the *Reformed Churches*, say, that they are the same in Substance with the Father, equal in Power and Glory. The *Arian* says, this can't be; the other, it can't be otherwise, without wresting the plainest Words. The *Arian* says, this is contrary to *Reason* and *Common Sense*; the others say, it is contrary to neither, and that the Words of Scripture can import no less. On both Sides they seem zealous for Scripture; but 'tis certain, that both can't be in the right. When therefore there is a profess'd *Agreement* in the Words of Scripture, but so vastly wide a *Difference* in the *Interpretation*, the Question is, whose *Interpretation* is most agreeable to Scripture, and how we ought to govern our *Ministerial Conduct* in *Ordinations*, and other *Ministerial Acts*. Should all be ordain'd, that allow the Words of Scripture, which is the thing Mr. *Jacomb* contends for, 'twill necessarily follow, that some must be admitted to preach the Gospel, that wrest and pervert the Scriptures. And therefore, as every one in this Case must judge for himself, so to know, whether we can proceed regularly, it concerns us to enquire, what *Interpretations* these put upon Scripture
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that offer themselves to *Ordination* ; and if they put such as, according to them, overturns the Scripture, they can't proceed with Satisfaction, and indeed, may not proceed at all, lest they encourage those that they think will ruine the Souls of Men.

Mr. J. thinks it unreasonable, that there should be any such *Enquiry* made ; and that we ought to trust to Persons *Honesty*, that they'll preach the Gospel, which they profess to believe, as they ought. On the contrary, we think, when so many do *wrest the Scriptures* to the probable, or rather certain *Destruction* of themselves and others, we can't proceed with too much Caution in such a weighty Affair. To answer for our Conduct, we think, we ought to *try*, according to the best of our Judgment, whether those that say they are *Apostles* are such or no, lest those should *creep in unawares*, who deny the only Lord God and our Saviour Jesus Christ ; or as it may, and perhaps more agreeably be render'd, who deny Jesus Christ our only Master, God, and Lord, *Jude 4*. And if Men's Notions, as to Religion, may not in any Case be the Subject of Enquiry, what doth Mr. J. mean, *p. 29*. when he says, " That by proposing himself to be " ordain'd, he had submitted himself of Course to " the usual Methods which they observ'd, for trying " the Qualifications of *Candidates* [of Persons to be " ordain'd, I suppose, it should have been] and that " he did not propose to screen himself from a second " Examination ? " Does he think, we have no Regard to a Person's Faith in these Examinations ? That we only enquire whether they understand the *Languages* and *Philosophy*. If this was all we examin'd into, this would give him just Occasion to upbraid us with our candid and favourable Tryals, which tho' he mayn't be afraid to submit to, when he knows *himself* and his *Examiners* so well ; yet I very much question (and I assure him upon pretty good Grounds) whether he hath not some *Nostrums* in *Divinity*, which he would willingly keep from his *Candid Examiners* : And I can't help thinking, that whatever Concern is pretended for Scripture Expressions ; yet the great Reason of refusing any Explications of Scripture was, because

cause he could not explain them to Satisfaction, or in other Words, that he could not explain them otherwise, than either Dr. Clark, Mr. Whiston, or others of the same Stamp and Kidney have done, which Explications he knows we think are forc'd, and would not be accepted. And would it be at all uncharitable, at least now, to think so (if I had no other Grounds) when there appears such a *Tenderness* for the Errors of *Arius* in this Performance? p. 22. Would Mr. F. discover such a *Tenderness* about *Transubstantiation*, *Purgatory*, &c? I can't think he would heretofore have scrupled at all to renounce these, and why not then those Errors of *Arius* as well, that have occasion'd those Disputes that have been amongst us?

If Mr. F. can't renounce any Opinions, how gross, absurd, and dangerous soever, because called Error and Heresy by others; yet why could he not renounce *Arianism*, if he thought it so himself? And when he knows so well what the particular Errors of *Arius* are that we expect a Renunciation of, why doth he quibble so egregiously and say, "I renounce all Errors, *Socinian*, *Arian*, *Athanasian*, yours and my own; and tell us, that in the Answer to Mr. P.'s Case there are some Truths put among what are called the *Arian* Principles?" To me it seems plain from what he says, p. 12. that he doth not think that *Arians* are mistaken at all, or at least dangerously mistaken. If this be not his Notion, I confess I don't understand the Questions that are put there. These Questions, and his Refusal to renounce the Opinions of *Arius* that we think are plainly condemn'd by the Scriptures, put it out of all Controversy with me, that we did not suspect Mr. F. without reason. Nor doth it at all lessen the Suspicion, that he says he can subscribe that controverted Passage, 1 John 5. 7. as he says, p. 25. For if we consult the Letter to a Dissenter, p. 18. the Author of which is, without all Dispute, an *Arian* or *Socinian*; he says just the very same that Mr. F. doth, and would no more scruple to subscribe this Passage than he. This shews how bold some can make with the Words of the *H. Ghost*, and what forc'd Interpretations some put upon them. Why might not Mr. F. be one of that Number?

ber? And if he was not, why would he not put us out of doubt, and so make our Way clear to his Ordination?

There is no doubt to be made but Mr. J. fixeth some *Idea* to the Words of the *H. Ghost*. Either he understands them in the *Sense* that *Dr. Clark* doth, or in the *Sense* that the *Church of England* doth; or else, he fixeth some peculiar *Sense* of his own upon them; and why should he make such a Difficulty of letting it be known? I think his Ordainers have as good a Right to be satisfy'd as any People he can settle among. And therefore seeing he says, p. 17. that he will explain the Scriptures to them, it not only shews that he allows them capable of Explication, but argues him to be very unreasonable, that he should refuse to explain them to those Ministers that must judge of his *Fitness*, and *Abilities* to be a Preacher, when he says he shall do this to the People to whom he ministers, and make them the Judges of his Explications for themselves, p. 17. Indeed I see one considerable Reason of this Difference; and that is, that People are likely to be more easily impos'd upon than Ministers can. But after all, if there be so much reason for refusing to acquiesce in the Explications of others, or to make any of his own, and this be done out of *Reverence* to *Scripture*; I would ask, whether the *Scriptures* did not always deserve as much *Reverence* as they do now? And whether he thinks that the Reasons he offers are of perpetual Obligation? If so, how is it that he did once subscribe the *Articles* to satisfy the *Government*, and won't so much as tell us, who were desir'd to be his Ordainers, whether one of them be true and according to *Scripture*? I think this gives too much occasion to presume that Mr. J.'s *Stiffness* was owing to a Change of Notions; that he hath other Thoughts of the Article now than when he did subscribe it: And that he would no more do it now to satisfy the *Government* than to satisfy us. What Mr. J. offers from A. B. Tillotson, A. B. Tenison, and Mr. Baxter, hath plainly another Design than he brings it for. There was not one of them that refus'd to subscribe the *Articles*. Mr. Chillingworth indeed did,
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and no wonder, when as Mr. *Peirce* says, * and every body knows, he was always lookt upon as a *Socinian*. As to the others, If Mr. *J.* had but said half so much to satisfy the Assembly as these have to satisfy the World that they believ'd the Doctrine of the *Trinity*, it would, without any Subscription, have had its just *Weight* and *Regard* with us: But when a Minister shall be cross and peevish, and bent upon his own *Humour*, and give no Satisfaction, we can't alter our Resolution but upon better Consideration; and if others can content themselves to act in the *dark*, we can't.

I have said what I thought necessary in Vindication of that which the Assembly did lay *Stress* upon in Mr. *J.*'s Case. As to the Objections and Answers, that he hath laid before the World, I shan't think my self any further concern'd with them, than to tell Mr. *J.* that he hath not acted, I think, like a Gentleman, or a Minister, or indeed with a tolerable Ingenuity, to publish to the World a *free Conference* upon the Strength of his *Memory*, and in what Terms he hath thought fit. He might as well have told the Names of the *Objectors*, as publish'd their *Objections* without their Knowledge; and if he had, Persons would have been able to remember whether such Things had been said by them or no, or in that Manner, and under these *Disadvantages* that some of them are represented: But if this would not well consist with that *Freedom* of Speech and *Vote*, that ought to be encourag'd in all *Assemblies*, as Mr. *J.* says, *p.* 1. how admirably does it consist with this Freedom, to publish what occur'd to Men's Thoughts upon the *Spot* in an *unexpected Debate*, and to publish it, without giving them any Opportunity, either to disown what was offer'd if not *substantial*, or to deliver it to the World in their own Words, that it might be fitted for publick *View*? If an Assembly may be serv'd after this *Rate*, there must nothing be offer'd in any *free Debates*, but what is calculated for the *Press*; and by this Means, there are few that would care to speak at all, that
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had not an unaccountable *Itch* to be *Authors* at any *Rate*, unless they knew before hand what it was they were to speak to, as 'tis certain they did not in Mr. J.'s Case. Whether Mr. J. hath done the Members of the Assembly *Justice*, in representing Things as they were deliver'd, I can't say, because some of them it seems were deliver'd privately; and because I was not present at all the publick Debates: But I can be pretty sure however, that some Things have an *odd Turn* given them; and others, I believe, tho' deliver'd off Hand, will appear to have a great deal more *Weight* in them, than Mr. J.'s studied Answers have. But let this be as it will; as I am a Member of the Assembly, I have reason to complain, that we should be treated as we are, tho' not traduc'd. However, in this, I am sure we are traduc'd, that we laid a mighty *Stress* upon all the Objections that Mr. J. hath thought fit to lay before the World, when 'tis very plain by what we have publish'd, we did not.

If Mr. J. would have acted fairly, and with any Regard to the Assembly, or but common Civility, he should have stuck to what we have printed, and not muster'd up 31 Objections, (some of which he owns, *p. 10*, were never heard by the Assembly as a Body) and given Answers to them, when 'tis plain, our Resolution as to his Ordination turn'd upon this, that he would give us no Explication of Scripture, to satisfy us that he understood them himself, and would explain them to others, as we think they ought to be explain'd and understood. This he complains of, *p. 4.* as printed with some *Aggravation*: But as it is in the very Words of the *Minute*; so it very unhappily falls out, that he attempts to prove throughout his whole *Performance* what the Assembly have said; so that now he must retract his Book, or own that the Assembly have done him Justice. And 'tis very evident also, that no Injury is done to Mr. J. in the publick Representation that is given of Mr. *Moderator's* Answer; for whatever his private Thoughts of Mr. J.'s *Honesty* or *Intentions* might be, what he deliver'd as *Moderator* is fairly represented: And there was no need to add, that we
should

should be ready to ordain him if he should think fit to comply with the Resolution of the Assembly. He hath since thought fit to take that Work out of our Hands. And seeing 'twas most to his Satisfaction to be ordain'd by Men of his own Principles, I don't know, why any should envy him the Satisfaction. And perhaps, it would not be very uncharitable to imagine, that this is what he had always in View; because he came prepar'd to oppose the Assembly, and had drawn up Answers at least in his own Thoughts to the Objections that would, as he suppos'd, be made against his Proposal. If Mr. Jacomb should hereafter have any thing relating to himself debated in our Assembly, as I don't suppose he will, I hope he'll give us leave to publish our own Debates in our own way; or give us Assurance before hand, that he will not print them in his. For if the Step that he hath taken should be drawn into Precedent, there is no one can be safe in delivering his Thoughts, unless he comes prepar'd to deliver nothing but what he thinks fit for publick View. Mr. J. must know, that we did not enter upon our Debates on his Case with any Suspicion of such a Treatment, as we have had; and if he can think well of himself for what he hath done, I may presume, from the Abhorrence that most have of such a Management, that few else will.

F I N I S.

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